HISTORIAN'S DISPUTE

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PREFACE

The book is the collection of articles which have been published in the daily Frontier Post, Lahore and Peshawar. I am particularly thankful to Khaled Ahmed the Resident Editor, who published all essays in spite of opposition from a number of prominent individuals who regarded my writings as a national risk.

These articles, from time to time, also provoked the readers to initiate lively debates. Some times, I am accused of distorting history in order to create chaos. However, I am happy that my interpretation of history creates some ripple in the stagnant water.

Mubarak Ali

PART 1

1

MUSLIM RULE IN INDIA

Was there Muslim rule in India?

James Mill, writing the history of India for the first time, divided it on the communal basis as Hindu, Muslim, and British periods. The whole medieval period is called the period of Muslims rule signifying the domination of foreign race over India. The Britishers, by dividing the history of India on a communal basis, called their rule as secular and enlightened and termed it not Christian but British, implying that the Britishers liberated India from the communalist rule of the Muslims and ushered in an era of peace and religious tolerance.

Indian historians also accepted this division of history consciously or unconsciously. Resultantly, history written with this approach deepened the communalist feelings and created a gulf between Hindus and Muslims. Historians on both sides began to glorify their past and denigrate the history of the other.

The period from the Arab conquest to the fall of the last Mughal ruler (712-1858) is termed as the Muslim period although contemporary historians never called this period Islamic or Muslim. They referred to it as Turkish, Khilji, Lodhi, or Timurid because it was the period when these different dynasties ruled over India and these dynasties did not comprise the whole Muslim community of India but some privileged classes of the society who formed a ruling elite.

The Muslim community in India was not formed on an egalitarians basis, but was divided into different classes according to wealth and social status, In The upper starata of society were the nobles who controlled all the high ranks in the administration and possessed *Jagirs* and landed properties. Next to nobility was the class of the artisans, petty shop-keepers, and clerks who were subservient to the nobility. In the third category were the unskilled labourers and the peasants. These different Muslim classes were aligned to one another in the name of religion but otherwise they were neither culturally nor socially related to each other.

The Muslim community in India was very much caste-conscious and proud of their ancestry. Culturally, there were wide differences between the nobility and the other lower classes as the poor were not in a position to produce any higher culture. It was monopolised by the upper classes and through cultural manifestations they preserved their domination and superiority. Throughout history, the language, dress, food, houses, and etiquettes remained different and kept the lower classes at a distance. The Muslim community was not a unit but fragmented into different classes and castes on social and economic bases.

It was the need of the Muslim ruling class to get the support of Muslims in general in order to protect their privileges. To achieve this, the ruling classes kept a permanent conflict going between Hindus and Muslims. To justify their imperialist wars, they called them holy wars and persuaded the common Muslim man to fight and sacrifice his life for the cause of religion.

During the war or the political Crisis, the slogan of Islam in danger was raised but as soon as the Crisis was over the ruling classes assumed the role of exploiting forces, for example, during the Sultanate period a Hindu convert slave

Khusru Khan revolted against Qutbuddin Mubarak Khilji and after assassinating him, occupied the throne and declared himself the ruler. The Muslim nobility, threatened by his rule, called him an unbeliever who attempted to oust the Muslims from power and to revive Hindu rule. Although Khusru neither took any steps which could be detrimental to the Muslim community, nor proclaimed himself a Hindu to set up Hindu rule. The only thing which was resented by the Muslim nobility was his Indian origin. They were not ready to recognise the overlordship of a neo-Muslim. It appears from contemporary sources that different segments of the Muslim society supported him, but they were condemned by a contemporary historian Ziauddin Barani as opportunists. The foreign origin. Turkish nobility rallied against Khusru Khan and unitedly fought against him and overthrew his government. It was a clash between the Indian converted Muslims and the foreign Muslims who refused to treat the neo-Muslims as equals.

In the communalist political atmosphere of India, the term Muslim rule became very popular. Once the period was recognised as "Muslim", it obliterated class consciousness and every Muslim, high or low, began to regard this period as his. This concept popularised such phrases as "when we ruled over India, or in our period the art and literature flourished, or our period was the golden period......"

This concept gave currency to the rule of Muslims in general instead of dynasties and consequently made every Muslim defend the ruling dynasties and their policies as his own and also the weaknesses of this period became his personal weaknesses. He owned all the Muslim rulers and glorified their achievements. All the misdeeds of the rulers were justified and to him each of them became enlightened, religious, and tolerant. Any criticism of these rulers became intolerable. Their imperialistic policies, their conquests and victories became a

part of his past legacy. The exploitation of the ruling classes was completely forgotten and every Muslim became the inheritor of their culture.

This approach of history concealed all the class conflicts and the difference between high and low, the nobles and the foreign and local Muslims.

In fact, history of India is the history of Muslim dynastic rule. If this history is examined from the dynastic point of view, the ruler and the nobles could be criticised as historical persons. Mohammad bin Qasim or Mahmud of Chazni could be condemned as invaders. But once they became a part of the religious process, they became immune from all criticism and became sacred and holy. History ceased to be history and became blind faith.

If the history of the Muslim dynasties is analysed from the class point of view, a common Muslim would have no reason to be proud of the conquests and victories of the Muslim rulers. Neither would he be proud of the annihilation of the unbelievers or the dismantling of temples because the object of these wars was to get benefit only for the ruling classes and not the general people. Every new conquest brought more war booty and new land to the ruling elite. The common people were used in the name of religion to serve the vested interests of the upper classes.

To hide the class conflict, to have a dignified place in the history and to nourish the communal feelings, the myth of the Muslim rule in India is promoted and nurtured. The Muslims ruled over India and kept the Hindus as their slaves is the concept which creates pride in the common Muslim. The facts were quite different. The Muslim ruling classes kept the administrative structure intact and the powers and privileges of the Hindu zamindars remained untouched. As an intermediary force, they collected revenue from the peasants, Hindus and

Muslims alike, and deposited it in the government treasury. They were called the *Muqaddam, Chaudhry, Rai,* and *Rana.* The countryside was ruled by them. They were quite independent in their territories. Similarly, there were a number of petty Rajas and Hindu rulers, who, after paying the tribute, ruled their states independently. Therefore, there is not truth in calling the whole period the Muslim period.

To understand the history of the Medieval India, it is imperative to examine who were the rulers and who were the subjects? The ruling classes consisted of both the Muslims and Hindus and the same was the case with the subjects. Although the Hindus were in majority, there were also Muslim peasants, workers, and artisans who were exploited without any consideration. Therefore, it is more appropriate to say that in the medieval period there was the rule of the Muslim dynasties and not the rule of the Muslims in general. The common Muslim suffered under the Muslim rulers like the common Hindu. He never formed a part of their rule and never shared their privileges. If history is examined from this point of view, it would become easy to condemn these ruler for their injustices, for their misrules, and for their brutalities. It would reveal their true character and they could be judged historically.

Did the Muslim rulers fight holy Wars in India?

The Muslim ruling dynasties, after consolidating their power in India, constantly fought against the Hindu *rajas* in order to expand their territories. These wars are called *Jihad* (holy war) by the contemporary and the modern historian because it justifies the looting, plundering, and enslaving of the unbelievers. The appellation of *Jihad* provided a moral ground for all the brutalities which were committed in the wars.

Moreover, once these wars were termed *Jihad*, the fighters became holy warriors and in case of death, they were declared martyrs. The status of all the conquerors was raised to sacredness. That is why Muhammad bin Qasim, Mahmud of Ghazana, and Muhammad Ghori are seen as heroes and their real motives to conquer India are ignored.

The religious interpretation ralyses our understanding of history and we fail to comprehend the historical process and omit to examine the social, political, and economic forces which were working in the background. For example, Mahmud of Ghazana fought a number of battles against the Hindu rulers, but at the same time he also fought against the Muslim rulers of Central Asia. He had a perfect war time-table. He reserved the winter season for India and the summer for Central Asia. Later on, the Muslim rulers of India fought battles against both the Muslim and Hindu rulers. Actually the Muslim rulers used the slogan of the holy war for their own vested interest. When Babur fought against Ibrahim Lodhi in the battle of Panipat, he did not say anything about the nature of war, and kept silent, but when he fought against Rana Sanga, he declared it as *Jihad* and to assure the soldiers of his piety he poured the wine on the ground and dashed his wine glasses.

Although the Muslim rulers fought against the Hindu *rajas*, in the army of the Hindu *rajas* there were Muslim soldiers who fought against the Muslims. In the battle of Kanwaha, there were Muslim *Mewatis* who fought against Babur, the same was in the battle of Haldighat where Muslim soldiers opposed the army of Akbar. Similarly, there were Hindu soldiers in the Muslim army who fought for the cause of a Muslim ruler.

In the later Mughal period, the situation drastically changed. Religion remained an identity only for the upper classes of the Muslims while the common Muslim integrated

with the Hindus. Especially in the army, Hindu and Muslim soldiers mixed with each other and served their ruler, loyally, irrespective of religion. The great thinker Shah Waliullah lamented on this situation, but in spite of his sermons and preachings, he could not separate the Hindu and Muslim soldiers from the armies. It had become impossible in this period to organise pure Hindu or Muslim army. Shah Waliullah invited Ahmad Shah Abdali to fight against the *Marhatas* in the third battle of Panipat, but there were a great number of Muslim soldiers in the *Marhata* army. The office of their artillery was Ibrahim Gardi who inflicted heavy casualties on Abdali's army and died fighting for the *Marhata* cause.

In fact, the wars which were fought by the Muslim rulers were not religious, but purely political in nature. These were the wars of expansion and for the acquisition of more territories. Muslim rulers raised the slogan of holy war just to hide their real motives and to create religious zeal among the soldiers. To understand the history of Muslim dynastic rule in India, we require a secular and not a religious point of view. The secular interpretation of history will not only reveal the true nature of these rulers but demolish the image of their holiness. Moreover, the secular point of view purifies the history of religious prejudices and hatred. In the history of India, the conflict was not between Hindus and Muslims, but between two ruling classes.

Did the British seize power from the Muslims?

Generally it is believed that the British had seized the political power from the Muslims and reduced them to a position of insignificant. It is nothing but a myth which leads to misunderstanding of history.

The Mughal family who ruled over India started to

decline after the death of Aurangzeb. The strong and powerful institution of kingship lost slowly its grandeur and stability. The blow which weakened the monarchy came from the Mughal nobility who aspired to acquire more power, grooming their own candidates to the throne. They caused civil wars on the question of succession and the successful candidate used to become a pawn in the hands of strong nobles.

The unsuccessful and disillusioned nobles left the court and established their own independent kingdoms, such as the Deccan, Oudh, and Bengal. The loss of these provinces further weakened the monarchy and financially it became bankrupt, unable to support the huge structure of the empire. The political and financial weaknesses made the Mughal King imbecile. He lost the support of the nobility which was the main pillar of the monarchy. The conflict between the different factions of the nobility reduced them to nullity.

The severest blow to the Mughal monarchy was delivered by the external forces of the *Marhatas*, the *Sikhs*, the *Jats*, and the *Rajputs*. Inspired by nationalism, these forces rebelled against the Mughal rule, and involved the central government in a series of wars. The Mughals failed to crush these forces and the wars drained their financial resources, reducing the Emperor only to a nominal head.

In the first phase, the Mughal Emperor became a puppet in the hands of different factions of the nobility. Later on when the *Marhatas* occupied Dehli, the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam tried his luck along with Shoja-ud-dola of Oudh, and Mir Qasim of Bengal to fight against the British. The defeat in the battle of Buxer sealed the fate of those rulers. Shah Alam surrendered to the *Marhatas*, who had already established their rule over North India. Though Shah Alam was the Emperor he was a pensioner of the *Marhatas*. With the ascendancy of the *Marhatas*, the Mughal Empire collapsed and lost all political

power. It was the *Marhatas* Army which ruled supreme and protected the Emperor.

The Emperor lost all his political power. He had no army and no power to appoint government offices on his own accord. He received grant from the *Marhatas* for his livelihood. He had not a significance except that he was Emperor in name.

When Lord Lake occupied Delhi in 1803, he did not fight against the Mughal Arm, but against the *Marhatas*, who resisted fiercely and surrendered after a great loss. After the occupation of Delhi, the person of the Emperor was automatically transferred to the British and he became their pensioner. Thus the British seized political power from the *Marhatas* and not from the Mughals.

When the British became a political power in India, the Muslim rule had already ended and the Muslim states of Oudh, Bengal, and the Deccan were repeatedly defeated by the *Marhatas* who were emerging as a great power and had the chance to rule over India after the final removal of the Mughals. The British domination actually deprived the *Marhatas* of political power. It was not the Muslims who lost power, but the *Marhatas* and other Hindu elites such as *Jats*, *Rajputs*, and the *Sikhs*, who were ready to assume power after expelling the Mughals from their respective territories. The British seized the chance and became rulers. Perhaps, the Muslims were relieved that they were spared from the Hindu rule. The British were welcomed to them.

The Indian Muslims and the 'defensive battles'

The Muslims arrived in India as conquerors with a variety of motives. As aggressors they fight wars in a foreign land with immense risks, they fight courageously because their survival depends on their victory; in case of defeat, they can be

completely wiped out. That was the reason that the Muslim conquerors mostly won their battles and defeated their Indian counterparts.

But the situation changed as soon as the conquerors became the rulers and established their kingdoms. Once the aggressor was transformed into a legitimate ruler, he had to defend his kingdom against aggressions; and history shows that the Muslims never fought the defensive battles with the same zeal and courage as they fought as aggressors. For example, in the first battle of Panipat, Babur easily defeated Ibrahim Lodhi, but he faced stiff resistance in the battle of Kanwaha where he fought against the *Rajputs*.

The same happened when the Muslims fought against the British. In the battle of Plassy, Sirajuddoula and his army failed to offer any resistance to the British. Although Tipu Sultan personally fought valiantly and sacrificed his life, his army showed no courage to fight against the outsiders. In the battle of Buxer there were three Muslim rulers; Shah Alam, Mir Qasim, and Shujauddoula, but all of them escaped from the battlefield ignominiously.

Now the question arises: why the Muslims did not fight their defensive battles while the Indian nations such as the *Marhatas*, *Rajputs*, *Jats*, and *Sikhs* fought with courage? For example, when Mahmud Ghaznavi invaded India, Jaipal, Anandpal, and other Rajput rulers defended their territories and some of them sacrificed their lives in the battle fields. Prithavi Raj and Rana Sanga both valiantly defended their kingdoms against the Muslim aggressors. The reason is that these nations had their roots in the Indian soil, therefore, it was their natural instinct to defend it against any foreign invasion. On the contrary, the Muslim rulers as well as people kept their political, religious, and cultural loyalties outside India and had no feelings of patriotism to defend the country. This was the

reason why the Muslim community produced a number of traitors and agents. Instead of defending the country, they made attempts to protect and preserve their personal interests.

For example, Babur was invited by Daulat Khan Lodhi to come to India and outst Ibrahim Lodhi from power. The presence of disloyal nobles in the army of Ibrahim caused his defeat, Sirajuddoula could not succeed against the British because Mir Jafar and his companions betrayed him and joined the British. Tipu Sultan failed because Mir Sadiq provided all secret information to the British.

Another event clearly indicates the apathy of the Muslims elite towards India. When Nadir Shah invaded India and was ready to return after a treaty with the Mughal emperor, an Iranian-origin noble Saadat Yar Jang instigated him to occupy Delhi and plunder it. After this, the massacre of Delhi population occurred and Nadir Shah left India after completely plundering the Mughal treasury. As the noble was Irani in origin, he had no attachment either to the people or to the country.

During the declining period, when the British were establishing their political domination, the Muslim rulers retreated and either compromised with them or left their territories to be occupied. On the contrary, all the Indian nations submitted only after bloody encounters. The battles which were fought between the British and the *Marhatas*, the *Sikhs*, and the *Rajputs*, proved that Indian nations fought for every inch and submitted only when all their resources were exhausted.

To Convert as Unequal

History is interpreted not only with the personal point of view of a historian, but it also reflects the trends and

tendencies of a society. These histories which are written to satisfy the needs of a society for the time being soon become obsolete. The best example is of the historical novels of Abdul Halim Sharar, whose popularity soon declined with the change of time. The problem of this historiography is that in an attempt to justify its point of view it manipulates facts.

The historiography of the Muslim dynastic rule of India is full of such manipulations which create great hindrance to the understanding of our history. Although great changes are made in research methodology and new material is discovered, no attempt is made to revise the outdated interpretation. The result is that our historical consciousness remains narrow and stagnant.

For example, it is said and believed that the problems which India and Pakistan are facing today could have been solved, had the Muslim rulers, by the force of sword or persuasion, converted the Hindus to Islam. Once such historian, Najib Khan Akbarabadi, who is called "The historian of Islam" expresses his view : "When the Muslim assumed power, there was anarchy and disorder in India. If the Muslims had converted the Hindus, the whole of India would have been Muslim within a few years. But the Muslim rulers strictly followed the policy of tolerance towards the Hindus and protected their religions."

Why did Muslim rulers make no attempt to convert the Hindus? The historians failed to examine the causes of their religious policy. The Muslim rulers had political power. There was no threat to their rule. They ruthlessly crushed all rebellions. The Hindus surrendered and became loyal. Under these circumstances, there was no need of conversion.

The ruling classes of Muslims in India were well-knit and jealously guarded their privileges and were not ready to share them with any other group. Moreover, the presence of

unbelievers was necessary for their survival. They imposed heavy taxes and exploited them ruthlessly without any moral conflict. To keep them submissive, an intolerant policy was adopted. The famous Muslim thinker Shah Walliuallah writes: "The unbelievers are rebellious people. They are not rational. Although the message has reached them they refuse to say God is one. Curse on them. They are the perpetually condemned people."

Those Indians who converted to Islam were not given a status equal to Muslims. The Muslims of foreign origin monopolised all high ranks in the government and formed a privileged group with no room for the Indian converts. Thus, in the ruling hierarchy, the Indian Muslims had no place.

The Muslim ruling classes were very much conscious of their high social status. They were not ready to accept a lower cast converted Muslim as their equal. Therefore, they tried to convert only high caste Hindus such as *Rajputs* or Brahmans and then had equal relations with them. As conquerors, they were interested in keeping the lower castes socially backward, because these were the people who served them in every field. From the peasant to the sweeper, all came from the lower castes.

Throughout the Muslim dynastic rule, the ulema persuaded the rulers to adopt an intolerant policy toward the Hindus and not allow them to perform their religious duties openly. Shah Walliullah, although belonging to the period when Muslim rulers had lost power, insisted that :

1. Other religions should be treated contemptuously in order to establish the superiority of Islam and the Muslims.
2. The People of other religions should not be allowed to perform their religious rituals and ceremonies freely.

3. In all social and political matters, the unbelievers should not be given equal status because these restrictions would force them to convert to Islam.
4. The Muslim ruler should consolidate the domination of Islam over other religions.
5. The unbeliever peasants should be treated as beast's of burden.

Shah Walliullah was not in favour of converting the peasants, because, in his opinion, they were like retarded people having no feelings and sensibility.

Actually, there were two pillars on which the Muslim ruling classes established their power: the religious superiority and the sense of foreignness. They treated the local people as unequal and exploited them for their comfort and luxury. Even after the conversion, they were treated as unequal.

Hero-worship in Indian History

There are two categories of personalities in history: in the first category are the historical personalities who are judged by historians on historical evidence and whose virtues and weaknesses are recorded in history. Historians are free to criticise and eulogise their character and role in history. They are neither respected nor feared and judged as human beings. Their place in history is assessed on the basis of their work and achievements.

Some historical personalities, while in power, tried to conceal their misdeeds and highlighted only the bright aspects of their career, but as soon as they lost political power, they were reduced to human beings and were not spared by historians.

The great kings, generals, and administrators, after a lapse of time, are at the mercy of historians who unearth their true character and bring to light their crimes. All the great historical figures are open to criticism, and provide history a unique chance to dismantle all the myths which are woven around them.

The role of Napoleon as a great man was shattered when his life at St. Helena was published. There is contrast in Napoleon as conqueror and Napoleon as a prisoner. At St. Helena he showed himself a selfish and mean person. This aspect of his life prevented him from becoming sacred. There are historians for and against Napoleon and both treat him in the parameters of history.

There is a second category of individuals who emerged as historical but slowly and gradually were transformed to myths and as such they became immune to criticism and all their weaknesses are concealed and out of devotion, they are turned into supermen. In this capacity, they remain beyond the reach of history and belong to the domain of faith and devotion.

In the history of India, as a result of communal feelings, Muslims turned all their historical characters into spiritual and mythical forms, allowing nobody to criticise or judge them historically. Most of these individuals were not holy and not revered in their own time, but later on they were converted to great men under the requirements of the elite who needed such individuals to mobilise the people for their own ends.

Muhammad Bin Qasim, Mahmud of Ghazna, and Muhammad Ghori, were not treated as heroes or extraordinary persons by their contemporaries and they were forgotten as soon as their rule was over. They were revived under the communal feelings and were adored by the Indian Muslim community as conquerors and victors who humiliated the

Hindus and promoted Islam in India.

The communal approach made them more spiritual rather than historical. Such was the attachment of the Muslims to Mahmud of Ghazna that when Prof. Habib published a book on him and criticised him, he was immediately dubbed a traitor by the Indian Muslims. They refused to believe that Mahmud of Ghazna could have any weakness such as greed or lust of power.

Writing history with a communalist point of view, the Muslim historians made attempts to make most of the rulers orthodox Muslims in order to create reverence and respect for them. Their Islamic character concealed most of their crimes and they are still regarded by the Muslims as their rulers who promoted their cause in India.

Next to the rulers, are the ulema or the religious leaders whose role is eulogised by the communalist historians. Specially the role of Ahmad Sarhindi and Shah Wali Ullah is exaggerated with the aim to prove that *ulema* always defended and maintained the true faith and kept Islam pure in the land of unbelievers.

Besides the *ulema*, the role of the mystics is mythologised in history. They performed such miracles that they became superhuman in history and nobody dares to challenge their historicity.

Thus, in the Muslim society of India, there are rulers and generals who represent conquests and keep the flame of aggression burning in the heart of every Muslim who hopes that some day a Muhammad Bin Qasim or Mahmud of Ghazna would emerge and deliver the Muslims from backwardness and revive the past glory.

The role of the *ulema* and the mystics keeps this belief alive that the God is on their side and one day with the help of the spiritual power they would regain political power.

This interpretation of history prevents creation of self-confidence among the people. They always look to spiritual power to rescue them from oppressors. They always wait for a hero to come and protect them from evil. They don't have any confidence to fight themselves, and to resist exploitation.

The result of this approach is that the ruling classes retain their power, prestige and influence on the basis of their family, caste, social status and wealth, and the people remain docile, obedient, and dependent.

Muslim Conquest of India

The Muslim arrived in India in three phases and in three different capacities. First came in the Arab merchants to South India and established their settlements on the coastal towns under the protection of the local rulers. As a result of these commercial contacts, the Arab world came to know about the immense wealth and prosperity of India which created an urge among the Arab ruling classes to invade India and acquire its wealth. Merchants and traders have always been forerunners of imperialism and have paved the way for conquests.

However, the first Arab invasion was not directed towards South India but Sindh. This conquest was not the result of some immediate cause or accident ; it was planned during the orthodox caliphate period, but was postponed because of political and financial reasons. When the *Ummayyads* came to power and followed the policy of imperialism, Sindh was also conquered and incorporated in the *Ummayyad* empire.

The Arab conquest of Sindh was accomplished without much resistance. Most of the Sindhi tribes collaborated with the Arabs and helped them to establish their rule. Few battles were fought and not so much blood was shed. Resultantly, Arab rule was immediately recognised by the people. Rapid conversion of

the locals to Islam popularised the Arabs and soon their rule became the rule of the Muslims. Bitter memories of the Arab invasion were forgotten and their arrival was regarded as a blessing.

The Arab rule remained confined only to Sindh and failed to produce any effect on India as a whole. Even Sindh remained a backward province and neglected by the Umayyads and the *Abbasids*. After the disintegration of the *Abbasid* caliphate, independent Arab kingdoms were established and Sindh suffered immensely as a result of their civil wars which devastated the whole country and reduced the people to poverty.

In the third phase, the Truks invaded northern India and fought bloody battles with the *Rajputs*. To the people of India, the experience of the Turkish invasion was different than that of the Arabs. In north India, the Turks found a warrior race of the *Rajputs* who resisted them vehemently and fought bravely. The result was that the Turks had to fight for every inch of territory and much blood was shed on both sides.

The memories of these massacres, plunders, and capture of women and children were kept alive in the mind of the people and they crept in to folk-songs and stories thereby, the image of the Turks emerged as bloodthirsty, cruel, violent, and greedy. The bitterness of the conflicts created such a hatred that both communities resisted integration with each other. Culturally and religiously they remained poles apart.

Though the Truks ruled over North India they failed to convert the locals to their religions and remained a minority which was always threatened by the majority. Their rule was not accepted by the local rulers and people who continued to rebel and challenge their power. Consequently, throughout their rule, the early Turkish rulers kept busy in wars and maintained their rule with the help of powerful army.

The first hero of the Turkish conquest was Mahmud of Ghazna, who was an ambitious ruler and wanted to expand his empire to Central Asia. As his treasury could not afford these expensive wars, he turned towards India's accumulated wealth.

All of his invasions were unprovoked. He invaded India 17 times and after each battle he collected all the war booty and took it to Ghazna. Therefore, his wars and conquests left no lasting imprint on India. As soon as he died, his vast empire collapsed and his successors failed to maintain it. To the Indians, he remained an invader who brought devastation and calamity to their country.

The next hero Muhammad Ghauri followed in the footsteps of his predecessor and, after failure in Afghanistan and Central Asia, he tried to carve an empire in India. After a prolonged struggle, he ultimately succeeded in conquering Punjab and some parts of North India which were incorporated into his kingdom. When he died his kingdom was divided and ruled by his slaves. They all fought with each other and after shedding torrents of blood, one of them, Sultan Iltutmish became the ruler of India. His success in the battlefield made him a legal ruler.

The Turkish conquest of North India left lasting effect on the people of India who regarded the Muslims as invaders and aggressors. The hostile attitude of the Turkish ruling class further alienated the Indians from their rule. The difference between the rulers and the ruled was strictly kept and every attempt was made to suppress them politically as well as culturally. The foreign rule sapped their energies and made them docile and humble.

Muslim ruling dynasties and War

In India, the Muslim ruling dynasties kept their rule

intact with the help of a strong army and fought with the Hindu *rajas* and the Muslim rivals alike to save their throne. These wars were not religious but, political in nature. The slogan of *jihad* was only raised when the war was fought against the Hindu *rajas*, but if the war was between two Muslim opponents, silence was maintained on the nature of the war.

The Sultans and the Mughal emperors, in order to extend their empires, made attempts to conquer the provincial states such as Bengal, Gujrat, Khandesh, Deccan, and Sindh. The defeat of these states though strengthened the centre and added the revenue to the state treasury, it greatly damaged the growth of provincial culture. The different cultural groups who were patronised by the provincial rulers disappeared in oblivion after losing the royal patronage and the cultural life of the small states came to an end. The Delhi court never tolerated the glamour of the provincial courts.

Nearly all the rulers of Delhi followed the policy of imperialism. To maintain a large army, they were required to have wars either against their neighbours or recalcitrant rulers who refused to pay them tribute. The war machine, once started, never ceased and continued till the decline of the Mughals.

The continuous warfare played an important role in shaping the psyche of the Muslim community in India. To get training in the art of the warfare, was one of the important parts of the educational system. The nobles were proud to be warriors rather than poets or literati. Every Mughal *mansabdar* was expected to lead the army in a battlefield. Abdul Fazal, the great intellectual at court of Akbar, preferred to die fighting in the battlefield rather than escape. The society respected only warriors because they were the people who defended the community in case of crisis. This converted the upper class of Muslims into a warrior class and consequently it degraded all

other professions.

To fulfil the requirements of the army, war industry flourished. Skilled craftsmen were required to supply swords, daggers, arrows and bows, lances, shields, coats of mail, canon, and guns to the army. Horse breeding and horse training became an industry which was highly paid. The traders earned high profit after importing good breeds of horses from Central Asia, Iran, and Arabia. Whenever the army marched, a bazaar moved along with it to supply all kinds of requirements to the army and the nobility.

With the growth of the army, the state expenses increased and new taxes imposed to solve the financial crisis. The worst sufferers were the peasants who paid for the increased expenses of the army. Moreover, the involvement in wars gave no time to the administration to initiate any welfare programme for the people or to ameliorate their grievances. Their poverty and hunger was satisfied by the glories of the war. Huge buildings, arches, and pillars were constructed in memory of conquests to awe the people. Wars made the rulers great heroes and defenders of the people.

It was the policy of the Muslim rulers that after the conquest of distant areas, they encouraged the Muslims to settle there. The result was that the Muslim settlements were scattered throughout India. They felt secure as long as there was a strong ruler, but in case of a weak ruler, they were threatened by the Hindu population. The sense of insecurity made them loyal to the Muslim ruler to whom the always looked for protection. Relations with the local population remained hostile and attempts were made to reconcile with them. They always planned to suppress them with the help of the royal army and believed that their survival was in the suppression of the local population.

It was also a custom of the Muslim rulers to build a

mosque in the occupied territory. Some-times these mosques were built in those areas where there was no Muslim population. Some-times, they were built out of the material of the Hindu temples, or sometimes, the site of the mosque was chosen near the temple. This caused perennial conflicts between the Hindus and Muslims. Once the Muslims lost political power and British rule was established, the Hindu leaders demanded the restoration of their temples and the removal of mosques, which caused communal clashed and riots on this issue. This legacy of the Muslim rulers is even today keeping these communal feelings alive in India.

Despotism of the Muslim Ruler

The Muslim ruler of India was absolute in all respects. He was a despot and enjoyed all powers without any restraint. There were no powerful feudal lords, as in Europe, who could challenge his power or curtail his authority. The Indian nobility was the creation of the king and as such subordinate to his will. He awarded them high titles, assigned them *jagirs*, and appointed them on high posts. He could deprive them of all privileges if he disliked them. Thus the promotion and demotion of the nobility depended on the will of the king. Therefore, rarely did the nobles dare to rebel against their benefactor or challenge his authority.

The king was beyond the law. There was no appeal against his judgement. Sometimes he severely punished people on slight provocation. Such a tolerant ruler as Akbar once ordered a servant to be killed only because he had dozed off while looking after the lighting of the royal candles. Jahangir, once, on the slightest negligence of a person, ordered his skin taken off. The usual modes of punishment were: to trample under the feet of an elephant, to bury alive, or put to death after

torture. To render punishment was the royal privilege.

There was no law of primogeniture. Those who had power, could usurp it. After assumption of power, he was recognised the legitimate ruler. It was argued that to keep law and order in the society and to prevent anarchy in the country, the man in power should be recognised as a legal ruler. Thus, military power became the source of legitimacy and the society readily recognised all powerful military leaders as their sovereign in order to get protection. All crimes of a powerful military leader were concealed once he came to power. Alauddin Khilji shamelessly murdered his uncle Jalaluddin Khilji and declared himself king. To win the support of the people, he generously distributed money among the people who soon forgot his crime and recognised him as the king. There was no resistance against him and he easily occupied Delhi.

It was the practice that whoever occupied the throne, people shifted their loyalty to him. This encouraged the adventures and ambitious individuals to take the risk. Especially, the episode of Alauddin Khilji inspired many who attempted to overthrow his government following the same model as was adopted by him; but all of them proved unlucky and their coup attempts failed.

One incident, however, indicate the wavering attitude of the nobility. When a relative of Alauddin, known as Akat Khan, made an attempt to assassinate him and believing that the king was dead, declared himself king.

The nobility and the people of the court immediately recognised him as the ruler. Ziauddin Barani, a contemporary historian writing on this event, vividly portrayed the scene.

As soon as Akat Khan sat on the throne, the royal attendants immediately brought elephants for his review. The ushers warned the people to be respectful. *The* Qaris started to recite the Holy Quran. The musicians entertained the audience

by playing music and by singing songs. All the nobles, who were present, paid homage to the new king. The whole scene suddenly turned upside down when Alauddin survived and regained his power. The whole court again shifted its loyalty to him and left poor Akat Khan to face the death penalty.

To please his Muslim subjects, the ruler observed the religious rites and rituals. He used to go in procession to say the *Eid* and Friday prayers in congregation. To get the support of the *ulema*, he appointed them to religious posts. They were frequently invited to the palace for dinner or for religious discussions. On critical issues, the *ulema* were asked to give *fatwa*. Mostly, the *fatwas* were in favour of the ruler.

The ruler, to win the mystics, built the monasteries for them and supported them financially by giving them gifts and cash money. He specially respected the community of the *Sayyids*, and visited the tombs of the great mystics. The religious festivals were also celebrated with grandeur. However, the ruler followed the religion as long as it served his interest. Whenever it became an obstacle to his absolute power, he conveniently set it aside. He maintained clear distinction in the *shariat* and the rules of government which were secular in nature. As the *shariat* was not always helpful to him, he followed the secular rules and regulations known as '*Zwabit*' or '*Ain*'. These were changed according to the requirements of time to protect the interest of the king..For example, punishing the rebels and the enemies of the king, the *shariat* was not followed. Instead they were punished by the state regulations set by the king. Either they were openly killed or quietly poisoned.

When the newly converted Muslims rebelled during the time of Alauddin, the Sultan, in their absence, arrested their family members. Barani, writing on this event, commented that Alauddin started the practice of arresting women and children

of the accused, otherwise before this, women and children were never mishandled. One of the nobles of Alauddin, Amir Nusrat Khan, brutally treated the wives and children of those who rebelled. He, after capturing the wives and children of the rebels, gave the women to the sweepers to rape them and all children were cut to pieces in front of their mothers. The Sultan kept spies all over his kingdom and the people were arrested and punished on their reports. Many families were ruined on the false reports of these spies.

This was true policy of the rulers to maintain their absolute power. Some of these practices are still followed by our present rulers to crush their opponents and to preserve their power.

Racialism and Muslim rule in India

The early Muslim rulers of India were Turkish in origin and strictly adhered to the policy of racialism by excluding all local and non-Turkish Muslims from high ranks. They formed a close-knit community and monopolised all government resources and privileges.

Their racist attitude could be understood by their reaction when Raziya Sultana favoured Malik Yaqut, a black Muslim, and promoted him to the post of the keeper of the royal stable. The whole Turkish nobility strongly protested against her action which ultimately resulted in her removal from the throne.

A similar incident happened during the reign of Nasiruddin Mahmud when a local Muslim replaced Balban as *wazir*. His appointment was strongly opposed by the Turkish nobles and they refused to cooperate with him and paralysed the working of the government. The Sultan, under pressure, had to dismiss him from the post.

Balban, as a result of this incident, had such strong feelings against the local Muslims that when he became the Sultan he vowed not to appoint them on high government posts. He had nothing but contempt for the local Muslims and regarded it below his royal dignity even to talk to them.

The racist policy provided opportunities to the Turkish elite to plunder the resources of the country and to use them for personal ends, but it greatly weakened their power through loss of sympathy among all other social, cultural and ethnic groups of the Muslim community.

When the Khiljis revolted against them, they remained alone to defend themselves. They were defeated and ousted from power without any resistance.

Later on, the *Lodhis* and the *Suris* followed the same racist policy when they came to power. They did not trust the other ethnic groups of the Muslims and appointed only people from the Afghan tribes on all responsible posts. Bahlul *Lodhi*, the founder of the *Lodhi* dynasty, specially appealed to the Afghan tribes to come to India for his help. They were welcomed and generously awarded *jagirs* by the Sultan.

Soon, the Afghan nobles quarrelled with one another and destabilised the whole structure of the state. During the reign of Ibrahim *Lodhi*, a group of the Afghan nobles invited Babur to come to India and rescue them from the Sultan.

To solve problems with the help of a foreign power is one of the characteristics of the Muslim rule in India. This is the reason why all the invaders easily found a number of collaborates in India to help them in establishing their power.

In their turn, the Mughals also followed the same racist policy and favoured people from Central Asia and Iran. The local Muslims were neither trusted nor regarded equal. Akbar was the only emperor who realised the weakness of this policy and broadened his government by including the *Rajputs* in the

ruling classes which consequently infused a new life in the Mughal rule.

The policy of Akbar was not followed by his successors who conquered most of India but excluded the other races and people from sharing power. This created a reaction and the rebellions of the *Marhatas*, *Jats*, and *Sikhs* followed which broke up the Mughal empire.

Throughout the rule of the Muslim dynasties, the foreign-origin Muslims asserted their superiority on the basis of race and discriminated against the local Muslims. In the social order of the Muslim society, the local found the lowest place. They were never treated on an equal basis. The result was that the Muslim society remained divided and no attempt was made to integrate all ethnic Muslim groups into one community. The so called Muslim rule, thus, remained the rule of the foreign elite.

Decline of the Mughals

The consolidation and the prosperity of the Mughal empire were based on two factors loyalty of the nobility and the security of the peasants and merchants. The nobility defended the empire and maintained an efficient administration. In return for their loyalty and services, they were granted *Jagirs*, awarded high titles and privileges.

The peasants were the backbone of the state finances because the major share of the revenue came from agriculture. The merchants and traders paid a considerable amount in the shape of custom duties to the state treasury. As long as these two groups remained loyal and supported the government, the Mughal rulers ruled peacefully and effectively responded to all internal and external challenges.

First signs of the Mughal decline became apparent

when the nobility was persuaded by the different claimants to the throne to support them in getting power. The war of succession, which was fought between Aurangzeb and his brothers, divided the nobility in support of different claimants. The process of polarisation was further accelerated after Aurangzeb and the institution of kingship became so weak that it completely depended on the factional support of the nobility.

The result was that civil war became a common feature. Every succession to the throne was decided after a bloody battle. The internal disunity encouraged the rebels to challenge the authority of the emperor. There was no effective response. The Mughal empire became defenceless and a victim of all internal and external attacks.

Agriculture suffered as a result of the movement of the armies. Soldiers damaged the farms and looted the villages which reduced the peasants to poverty. They were unable to pay state dues. Trade and commerce suffered because of the insecurity of land and sea routes. Robbers waylaid caravans and looted merchandise. The government failed to eliminate them and provide as safe passage to merchants. On the other hand, the sea routes were controlled by pirates and the European nations. The trade link with the Arab world and the Ottoman empire was broken. It was a great financial loss to the merchants and the state.

The situation was further aggravated when the East India Company was granted trade concessions from the Mughal emperor and the rulers of the Indian states. It rendered the Indian merchants incapable of competing with the Company. Thu, the Mughal empire heavily lost the revenue from agriculture as well as from trade and commerce.

Once the financial condition of the empire deteriorated, it became impossible to maintain state institutions, such as army, bureaucracy, and the royal household. To meet these

expenses and to maintain the high standard of living, the emperor and the nobility started taking loans on high interest from the Hindu bankers. Soon their palaces, dresses, diamonds, and jewels were mortgaged and the Mughal nobility as a class lost all its energy and potential to play an active role in politics. It became a decrepit and imbecile class.

With the decline of the Mughal nobility, the industry which flourished as a result of their patronage also declined. Craftsmen and artisans who were engaged to produce swords, daggers, jewels, and perfumes, became unemployed, The financial crisis also affected the patronage of the poets, musicians, artists, and painters; who wandered from one place to another in search of job.

Although the fall of the Mughal empire created a political and cultural chaos, and anarchy disrupted the whole social and political order, the challenge of survival gave a new energy to the different groups of the society. It was the birth of a new life, a new culture.

The *Ulema* and the decline of the Mughals

In the later Mughal period, the ruling classes were aware of their weaknesses and yearning to restore the past glory of the Mughals which would ensure their domination and protect their status. Therefore, the nobility was busy in finding out the reasons for the decline and cure of the illness. Few attempts were made to introduce reforms in the army and the administration, two important pillars of the empire, and all these attempts failed and the process of disintegration continued.

The *ulema*, however, provided raison d'etre for the decline of society. Abandonment of religious practices caused the failure of the society. The Muslims, by adopting the Hindu

rituals, festivals, and habits diluted their own religion, which made them hollow from inside. The pollution sapped their energies and made them incapable of defending themselves.

It was the curse of God. The cure was the purification of the religion, renunciation of all Hindu rituals, and revival of the purity of Islam. The *ulema* also attacked the concept of the *wahdat-ul-wajud* which removed all differences between believers and non-believers and eliminated the identity of the Muslim community.

Once Hindu and Muslim became equal, the strength of the Muslim society collapsed. They also accused the *Shia* sect, which conspired against the *Sunni* establishment and eternally weakened it. One of the religious scholars Qazi Sanaullah Panipati lamented the contemporary situation of the Muslim society by accusing the growing power of the unbelievers and weakness of Islam because the *Shias*, *Sikhs* and *Marhatas* undermined the stability of the Muslim society.

It was the belief of the *ulema* that the process of decline could be stopped by establishing a *Sunni* state where the laws would be based on the *Quran* and *Sunnah*. The Islamic *Sharia* should be established. All the non-Muslims should be expelled from government administration and should not be appointed on high posts. The state should treat all the unbelievers as *Zimis* and impose *Jiziya* on them.

In order to strengthen the Muslims, the policy of *jihad* should be followed. Shah Walliullah, addressing the ruling classes of his period, exhorted that they should draw their swords from the scabbard and continue to fight to wipe out the unbelievers completely. The religion of Islam should be established and nobody allowed to challenge or attack Islam.

Shah Waliullah believed that the survival of the Muslim community in India depended on waging a holy war against the Hindus. He urged the Muslim military adventurers of his time

to drop their differences and use their forces against the Hindu powers. He had faith in some of the Afghan military leaders who were capable of subduing the Hindu and reviving the Muslim power in India, but all such attempts failed because these leaders were more interested in their personal interests rather than the community.

The *ulema* failed to convince the Muslim community that the revival of religion would automatically solve their problems. They also failed to infuse any spirit of religious vitality in them.

It was the wrong approach to attribute the decline of the Mughals to their irreligious beliefs or the pollution of Islam with Hinduism, because the Mughal rulers even at the time of the zenith were not religious and followed a policy based on Realpolitik. Whenever religion created problems for their personal rule, they kept it aside and never mixed it in their political affairs. Religion was subordinated to politics. The *ulema* were the servants of the court and issued *fatwas* to justify all the acts of the emperor.

Political power and the benefits kept the *ulema* silent and they never complained over the impurity of religion. Only during the period of decline, the factor of religion became important to them. Bereft of court patronage, the *ulema* survived on the slogan of the revival of Islam and mustered the support of the people for their own benefits.

Throughout the rule of the Muslim dynasties the *ulema* could not comprehend the social, political and economic forces which played an important role in shaping and disintegrating the society. It was beyond their understanding to analyse the process of the rise and fall of a society. That was the reason that their teachings failed to check the process of decline.

Whenever the rulers and the society faced any political, social, ore economic crisis the *ulema* could not help them find

solutions. These rulers who patronised the *ulema* and the mystics were forsaken at the time of trouble by these groups. Only those rulers who were not under their influence undertook the social and economic reforms. Professor Habib, commenting on this point, wrote that although Iltutmish was a religious man and had good relations with the mystics of his age, his religious beliefs could not help his son to keep the throne. 'Balban strictly followed all religious rituals, but it proved useless when his opponents eliminated his family. The most successful ruler of the Sultanate period was Alauddin Khilji, who was not a religious man, but he was very popular and people attributed miracles to him.

The approach that the Muslim power in India declined because of abandoning religion, prevented an analysis of the role of social, political, and economic forces.

The result was that no cure or solution was found. This propaganda helped the *ulema* to increase their influence, but they failed to see the changes which were taking place in the West. They could not realise the stagnation of the Indian society which rendered it incapable of responding to any challenge.

The 'Qasba' Culture

The decline of the Mughal dynasty and its political power was not the decline of the Mughal culture. It survived with a new energy and flourished under new patronage. At the zenith of the Mughal empire, the cultural activities were confined only to the capital cities and the small towns were deprived of the royal patronage. Only those Intellectuals and artists who had access to the Mughal court became well known while the others, who were in small towns, remained unknown and their talents never discovered and appreciated.

Once the Mughal court financially became bankrupt and failed to patronise the poets, artists, musicians, and historians, they left the capital in search of new patrons. These patrons were found in the new rising independent states whose rulers paid only lip-service to the Emperor but enjoyed full independence in every respect.

These states organised their courts on the model of the Mughals and in order to excel in culture and literature, each of them welcomed the jobless and poverty-ridden intellectuals, artisans, and talented people. Thus, Lucknow, Hyderabad Deccan, Rampur, Faizabad, Farrukhbadad, and Murshidabad became the centres of new cultural activities.

Mughal culture which was formerly confined to the court, was liberated and spread throughout India. It found new life and blossomed in a new environment.

Most of the Mughal nobles, like the intellectuals and artists, left the court and settled in small towns. A new '*Qasba*' culture developed under their patronage. These families built the mosques, schools, tombs, gardens, and palaces for their residence which changed the whole out-look of the small towns. Every town became respectable for having the notable families. These families promoted cultural activities by holding *Mushairas*, religious discussions (*Munazira*) and academic debates on various topics. They patronised wrestlers, artisans, and skilled workers. The result was that each town soon became famous for its speciality in some art or craft.

The culture life of every town became lively on the occasion of the Hindu and Muslim festivals which were celebrated with glamour. Every town has its own patron saint whose '*urs*' was organised on a grand scale. The '*qawwalis*' gave a festive colour to the event. Religious schools were built by the notables and reputed scholars were invited to teach there. Thus, every *Qasba* was proud to have famous *ulema*,

mashaikh, poets, and artists.

Besides cultural activities, the nobility of the *Qasba* promoted trade and commerce by building markets, bazars, and encouraging merchants to bring all types of commodities to sell in their towns. Every town became a hub of commercial activities and absorbed all those artisans, craftsmen, and skilled workers who had become jobless after the decline of the Mughal court.

The families of the notables, as a result of their role in promoting cultural and religious activities, became more superior than other social groups. Those families became famous and are known in the history as '*Kakori Sheikhs*', '*Sadat-i-Baaha*, and '*Sayyids* of *Kara*', etc.

The inhabitants of each town had love and passion for their town which is evident since 1750, in the poetry and literature written in praise of their hometowns. During this period, the history of different towns was written, such as Bilgram, Kakori, Hyderabad, and Farrukhabad, etc.

The society in these towns was divided into different classes. The nobles (*Ashrafs*) consisted of the fuedals, *Sayyids* and *ulema* who were related to each other. The lower classes were known as '*Ajlaf*' and consisted of artisans, craftsman, and workers. The upper classes were financially powerful and controlled all means of production. They lavishly spent money in celebrating festivals, and organising cultural ceremonies. They were spendthrift and pompous.

For example, in 1810, there were 18 families of notables in Patna District. They had nearly 100 servants and their annual expenses were two lakh rupees. On the other hand, there were thirty thousand poor families who spent 6 lakhs annually on their living. The difference between the nobles and the poor was sharp and as the culture was patronised by the rich, it served their class interest.

The Mughal culture, therefore, prospered and strengthened the social order of the society which prevented the people for playing an effective role. This culture, later on, when the English dominated the political scene, proved incapable of checking the western cultural challenge which soon overpowered the Indian society.

Roots of Muslim Loyalties

The Muslim ruling classes of India kept their political, social, and religious loyalties outside India. After the conquest o Sindh, the Sindh governors were subordinate to the *Umayyids* and the *Abbasids*. Even after their independence, the rulers of the Arab kingdoms continued to recognize the spiritual and political sovereignty of the *Abbasid* caliph and as a sign of their loyalty they caused the name of the caliph to be recited in the *Khutba*. This kept the relations of Sindh with the Muslim world and no attempt was made to establish an independent state by creating a centre of loyalty within it.

When the Turks founded .their state in northern India, their centres of loyalty remained outside India. During the early period, Ghazna, and later on, Ghore became places where they looked for their legitimacy. After the disappearance of the Ghazni and the Ghori dynasties, there was an opportunity to assert their independence, but the Muslim rulers of India, to legalise their rule, sought the recognition of the *Abbasid* caliphs. Their loyalty was shifted after the fall of the *Abbasids* to the *Fatimids* of Egypt. The name of the caliph continued to be recited in the *Khutba*.

The rulers of the Sultanate period sought the recognition of the caliph to legitimise their rule because most of these rulers usurped the throne. To assuage the feelings of the Muslim community, they tried to get his recognition from the

caliph. Sultan Muhammad Taghluq, after facing a number of rebellions, sent a special mission to the caliph spiritual as well as political head of the Muslim community of India and the Sultan just became his subordinate. Though it remained theoretical, but it contributed in shaping the psyche of the Muslim community who never gained self-confidence and always looked outside for help.

When the Mughals established their empire, they refused to recognise the Ottoman caliphate because they regarded themselves superior to the Ottomans. Though they never specifically claimed it, they presumed themselves caliph and their names were recited in the *Khutba*. That was the period when the Muslim community, feeling internally secure, asserted its independence. The Mughal Emperors were confident that they could protect their subjects without any foreign help. Moreover, the participation of the *Rajputs* in the Mughal government was an important factor which made the Mughal government and Indian government. The roots of the Mughal dynasty were strong and there was no need to get recognition from outside. Thus, it was the beginning of the composite culture. The Mughal court became the centre of loyalty to both, Hindus as well as Muslims.

As soon as the power of the Mughal declined, the Muslim community of India became restless and again started looking outside for protection and the name of the Ottoman caliph was recited in the *Khutba*. The attitude of the Muslim community indicates their ignorance of history and knowledge of the contemporary world. They were not aware that the Ottoman caliph was as imbecile as the Mughal Emperior. They never realised that their survival was not in foreign protection but internal stability based on the cooperation of the Hindus.

The Muslim community of India paid a heavy price for keeping its roots of loyalty outside India. They never

recognised their rulers as sovereign. To them, the caliph remained a symbol of spiritual and political power. There was only a short period when the Mughal emperors were powerful enough to protect them but as soon as their power declined, they lost their confidence in them and again shifted their loyalty outside India. During the whole of British period, the Ottoman caliph remained the spiritual, if not political, head of the Muslims of India. Only the fall of the caliphate in 1924 ended this relationship.

To keep the religious and political loyalties outside India was the great obstacle to developing Indian nationalism among the Muslims. It kept them alien to the soil of India. They always considered themselves as outsiders and strangers. This attitude prevented them for adopting Indian customs, rituals, and habits. Specially the upper classes strictly maintained their foreign character. To be a foreigner, remained a matter of pride to the Muslim community of India.

2

THE MUSLIM SOCIETY

A Disunited Muslim Community

The early Muslim traders who come to South India could not convert the local population as they did not have any political power. Only a few people, who were their employees or had some social contacts with them, became Muslims. In Sindh, the majority of the people were converted to Islam the Indian subcontinent was free from sectarian prejudices and the squabbles regarding different interpretations of Islamic jurisprudence.

The first Muslim sect which secretly propagated Islam in India was that of the *Ismailis*, who proselytised their version of Islam in Sindh and the Punjab. The *Ismailis* excelled in the art of proselytisation. They knew how to approach a person and introduce the new religion to him. To make themselves acceptable to the local population, they adopted local traditions, customs, Hindu names, and introduced their religious beliefs as if they were a part of Hindu religion. Through this policy they assimilated to the Indian society and thus, faced no strong reaction from the local population.

Their policy was to respect and not to attack local cultural values and introduce the *Ismaili* teaching in the terminology of Hindu religion. Their method proved successful

and they converted a large number of people to their sect which enabled them to establish their own independent kingdoms.

It is a tragedy that in the absence of the source material we are not in a position to assess their contribution to the politics and culture of this region. What we know about *Ismailis* is not through their sources, but through the writings of their enemies.

In the third stage, the Turks brought their version of Islam to India. It was quite different than that of the Arabs and the *Ismailis*. During this period a number of sects were developed having their own interpretation of Islam. Furthermore, four schools of jurisprudence were evolved in the *Sunni* community besides the *Shia* sect. The Muslims of Central Asia and Iran, in spite of their fanaticism, reacted against the political domination of the Arabs and started a nationalist movement to preserve their ancient cultural traditions and individuality. Successfully they revived the past ceremonies, rituals, and festivals, kept their old Persian names and resisted adopting Arabic language in place of Persian. Thus the Turks conquerors brought the Persianised version of Islam to the Indian sub-continent.

The Muslims of Central Asia were staunch *Sunnis* and followers of the *Hanafi* school of jurisprudence. They had religious intolerance and narrow mindedness. They were not like the *Ismailis* whose approach was human and tolerant towards the followers of other religions. As Turks had political power, the *ulema* wanted to use their state power not only to propagate their views but to suppress other religion and sects. They were against Hinduism and demanded that all Hindus, labelled as infidels and non-believers, should be killed. Their intolerant religious policy checked the intellectual growth in the society.

Mahmud of Ghazna, to please the *Abbasid* caliph and

his *Sunni* subjects, undertook a series of campaigns against the *Ismailis* of Multan. He crushed their political power and ended all their social and cultural activities. When the Ghoris founded their kingdom in the Punjab, they took a number of measures against the *Ismailis* under the pressure of the *ulema* to eliminate them from Multan and Sindh. As a result most of the *Ismailis* escaped and took refuge in Gujarat. Later on during the times of Sultan Mahmud Bogra and Sultan Muzaffar-I the *ulema* using the political power, completely suppressed them and forced them to disappear from the scene.

During the campaign against the *Ismailis*, most of the historical records were destroyed. *Ismailis* went underground and cut themselves off from the mainstream of the society. Their talents remained undiscovered. This separation damaged the solidarity of the Muslim society in India.

Iran, under the rule of the *Safavids*, became *Shia*. The *Shias* came to India after the exile of Humayun to Iran. Later on, under the patronage of Akbar, a number Of *Shias* settled in India. When Jehangir married Noor Jehan, her family became very influential and *Shia* nobles were appointed to high posts. This created a clash between the *Sunni* and *Shia* nobles and consequently weakened the nobility as a class.

As the majority of the Indian Muslims belonged to the *Sunni* sect, the state favoured them and was prejudiced towards other Muslim sects, who were suspected as enemies. This intolerant policy forced other sects to confine themselves to their own circles. As these sects felt oppressed and deprived, they had elements of rebellion and were ready to destabilise the *Sunni* state in order to get a more favourable and dignified position in the society.

These sectarian feelings remained more or less dormant during the growth of the Muslim state as everybody was getting some share from it. But as the society became stagnant and the

process of disintegration started, sectarian feelings surfaced and they clashed bitterly against each other on the issue of survival. What looked like a solid and stable society during the rise of Muslim power proved to be a weak and fragmented community revealed during the fall. Sectarian quarrels eroded the very foundations on which the society was based. Muslims rulers avoided the *shariat* as long as their personal interests clashed with it, but sometimes to please the *ulema* and their subjects, they imposed some aspects of the *Hanafi Shariat*.

Thus, the Muslim society remained disunited on the issue of *shariat* and this fragmented the whole society when the central power became weak.

The Urban culture

Majority of the immigrants who arrived from Iran and Central Asia were administrators, army officers, poets literary men, *ulema*, and religious scholars. It was no problem for the new arrivals to assimilate themselves in the ruling elite and secure suitable position in the government.

The expansionist policy of the Muslim rulers provided them opportunities to be absorbed in the administration. As the cities were the centres of the administration, the Muslim elite resided in the cities which brought a revolution in the city life and the Iranian culture flourished under the patronage of the ruling classes.

Palaces, gardens, mosques, and tombs introduced a new style in the architecture. Dress and food added a new flavour to the existing culture. The elite patronised dancing and music, organised poetic competitions and arranged religious discussions. All these cultural and social activities produced a new kind of urban culture. Moreover, to fulfil their needs and requirements, the nobility established the *Karakhanajats*

(factories) which produced dress, pottery, furniture, jewelery ornaments, perfumes, and things for decoration. The new modes of fashion enriched the urban culture.

Although the base of the urban culture was on the surplus wealth brought from the village in the shape of agricultural revenue, the irony was that the cities did not pay anything in return to the villages. The village people were satisfied with what was left over without realising the fact that the whole glamour of urban culture was the result of their labour and production.

The life of the big cities was dominated by foreigner Muslims whose mother-tongue was Persian, which was neither spoken nor understood in the rural areas. The foreign Muslims, on the basis of language, formed a separate class and asserted their superiority over the local Muslims. The court patronised Persian and completely neglected the local language.

Thus, it become difficult for the local Muslims to attain proficiency in Persian and to compete with those whose mother tongue was Persian: this automatically put them on the lower ladder of the society. The language separated the two groups from each culturally and socially.

In the pre-Muslim period, the untouchables and the lower caste people were not allowed to reside within the walled cities and were permitted only to come for menial jobs. As the Muslim nobility needed, a great number of servants, they allowed them to reside in separate residential areas which not only increased the population of the cities but provided cheap labour to the nobility. These lower classes completely depended on the nobility and survived on their bounty. Their dependency to the elite slightly changed their economic and social status.

However, the differences between urban and rural culture remained very sharp. Majority of the rural population was Hindu, sparsely mixed the local converted Muslims. They

"Arabic learning is the best of all. If you cannot learn Arabic, learn Persian to become aware of what is good in the end. Should you find yourself unable to master Persian, you must study the scriptures in your own language."

Another characteristic of the Muslim community was that it was divided into different castes which destroyed the cohesion and unity of the society. Although it was repeatedly said that all Muslims were equal and like brothers, the concept of equality remained for from realisation.

The attitude of the Muslim elite is indicated from one example that, in Saharanpur, the lower-caste Muslims were not allowed by the *ashraf* to cook the same food which was prepared in their houses; they were not allowed to invite any prominent person for dinner, they were not permitted to name their children like their children. It was the practice that people of equal status greeted each other by saying *Aslam Alaykum,* while the lower classes greeted with *Adab* and *Bandagi.*

The hatred against the local culture and the inequality uprooted a person from the soil and society consequently created in him a sense of insecurity. The Muslim community of India transformed itself into a rootless society, a society which had no attachment and no love for the soil. Their only concern was how to accumulate wealth. And there was no moral qualm about getting it legally or illegally. This made the society brutal and wild and it became incapable of producing any higher culture.

'Separateness' of the Muslim Community

After conquering and establishing political power in India, the Muslim ruling classes began to show contempt for the vanquished people and found no interest in studying their history and culture. On the contrary, they judged the Indian

made on the basis of colour. The people who come from Central Asia and Iran had fair colour, while the locals were dark or brown. This separated the two groups and the people of fair colour regarded themselves superior to the darker local people. The Mughal nobility were very conscious of their colour and to keep the fair colour, they preferred to marry Kashmiri women. The Muslim community in India adhered to the policy of apartheid long before it was invented by the whites in South Africa.

The foreign Muslim elite, to perpetuate their rule, degraded the other communities and proved that they were inherently incompetent and incapable. As most of the Iranians were on high posts, the myth of their intelligence was established. They were regarded as more cultured, civilised, and polite in manners in comparison to others.

Therefore, the administration was controlled by them. The Turks were famous as warriors and were preferred in army services. The Africans were mostly slaves and served as eunuches in the harems. The Kashmiris were regarded as disloyal and ungrateful people. The Afghans were not trusted by the Mughals and excluded from all high posts.

Thus, the Turks and the Iranians monopolised the army and administration and reserved all high posts, for themselves. The local Muslims suffered and in spite of their conversion were not treated on an equal basis.

3

THE ULEMA AND THE SUFIS

The Ulema and the state in medieval India

"The *Shariat* flourishes only under the shadow of sword."

The *ulema*, realising that the *shariat* or the religious laws could only be imposed with the help of state power fully cooperated with the rulers and persuaded them to put the *shariat* into practice with the help of the sword.

In India, their strategy was to control the administrative institutions in order to implement religious laws. They pressurised the rulers not to appoint those people on high and responsible posts who were not true Muslims. All rationalists, unbelievers, liberals, atheists, and agnostics were excluded from government services. Only those persons could be appointed who adhered to the religion strictly and sincerely made efforts to implement it in all aspects of life.

Following this policy, one of the religious scholars at the court of Iltutmish, advised him that according to the religious precepts it was incumbent upon a Muslim ruler to trust only the religious, pious, God-fearing people in implementing religious laws and to dismiss all those people who were non-religious, materialists, greedy, fraudulent, and opponents of the *shariat*.

Nearly all the religious posts such as *Qazi*, *Sadr*, *Muhtasib*, and *Shaikh-al-Islam* were reserved for the *ulema*. By

virtue of occupying these high posts, the *ulema* became a part of state apparatus. They were also needed by the rulers to get *fatwas* for all such actions which were controversial. The *fatwas* justified all policies of the ruler.

The *ulema* recognised any individual as a ruler who fulfilled two conditions: he must have military power to implement his policies; if after assuming power, the elite made its allegiance to him, he should be recognised as the legitimate ruler. Once his legitimacy was established, then it was the duty of every Muslim subject to obey him. In return, the Muslim ruler was not responsible to his subject. He was answerable to God alone.

The result was that, according to this theory, every usurper, by virtue of having military power, was recognised as the legitimate ruler and, once he was answerable to God, he became free to use all power against his subjects. This made the ruler a despot. He ruled over the destinies of his subjects unchallenged.

As despotism required glamour, pomp and show, the Muslim ruler was free to spend people's money on the building of huge palaces, wearing glittering dresses, jewels, and organising shows of grandeur which dazzled the eyes of the people.

A book 'Fatwa-i-Qazi Khan which was written during the Sultanate period, points out that the Sultan must possess pomp and show and, if any Sultan failed to maintain it, he should be overthrown. Even a Sultan, who had power, glory, and grandeur, inflicted cruelties, he should be respected and obeyed by his subjects.

The concept of a powerful ruler indicates the mentality of the Muslim elite who regarded it essential to protect their privileges. Only a powerful ruler was in a position to quell the rebellions, to suppress the people's protests, and to safeguard

their wealth and status.

The Muslim minority could not rule over the Hindu majority without adopting violent methods. Therefore, every usurper, and tyrant, was acceptable if he had military power. The roots of legitimacy were in the pomp, grandeur, and the power. Such ruler was eulogised by the elite as Defenders of the Faith.

To make personality sacred, all his wars against the Hindus were declared holy and he was called Ghazi and Holy warrior. This interpretation provided justification for his expansionist and imperialist policies. The result was that in India, Islam and war emerged as one, and Islam was regarded as a religion of bloodshed and plunder.

With the foundation of the Muslim elite rule, the *ulema* fully participated to consolidate it by using religion. They asserted the superiority of Islam and condemned Hinduism. Once the Hindus were regarded as inferior and low, it became justifiable to rule over them, to demolish their temples, to break their pilgrimage, to levy poll tax, and to declare their customs and rituals as immoral.

This separated the two communities and any movement for integration was severely condemned by the *ulema*. They always claimed to be the custodians of the Muslim community and as such it was their responsibility to check and supervise its religious practices. The separation of the two communities maintained and preserved their religious domination.

The *Ulema* and the Orthodoxy

The Turkish conquerors of India were the followers of the *Hanafi* school of Islamic jurisprudence therefore, they patronised the *Sunni ulema*, who under the state patronage, made attempts to introduce the Central Asian version of Islam

in India.

Their position was further strengthened when the Mongols invaded Central Asia and a great number of *ulema* and religious scholars immigrated to India. They were staunch *Sunnis* and intolerant to other religious and sects. As most of them were quite ignorant of Indian history and politics, it was difficult for them to understand the problems of the Indian society.

As immigrants, they had a great sense of insecurity and wished to have a strong Muslim ruler and a stable government to protect them. They wanted to suppress the Hindu majority and crush them up to an extent that they would not pose any threat to their existence. The Mongols invasion and devastation made them bitter against the non-Muslims and, in India, the Hindus became the centre of their hatred. They constantly urged the rulers to take action against the Hindus and kept them humiliated.

The *Sunni ulema* insisted that only the four schools of Islamic jurisprudence, i.e. *Hanafi, Shafei, Hanbali,* and *Maliki*, should be followed in India in order to keep the unity of the Muslim community. If other sects were allowed to practise their system of jurisprudence, the unity of the Muslims were threatened.

Because of this approach, the views of Imam Ghazali and Imam Ibn Taimiya were very popular in India, Imam Ghazali opposed *Ijtihad* in order to keep unity among Muslim *Ummah*, and Imam Ibn Taimiya preached the purification of Islam. These views suited the *ulema* in India who asked only to follow and imitate and not to interpret. Further, they opposed Hindus customs and rituals and always insisted on the purification of Islam.

When Akbar conquered Gujarat, the sea-route to Hijaz was opened and most of the *ulema* visited Hijaz to get religious

education there. On their return, these *ulema* further strengthened religious intolerance and narrow-mindedness.

The Indian Muslims believed that India was not a proper place to get religious education. If somebody wanted to pursue religious instructions, he should get it either in Central Asia, Iran, Iraq, Syria, or Hijaz, because the true Islamic spirit could not flourish in the Indian environment.

The result was that in India only those *ulema* were regarded as an authority who were trained from outside India. Even the *fatwas* of the Indian *ulema* were not honoured compared to the *fatwas* of the foreign *ulema*. It was the practice in India that on any controversial issue the *ulema* of Hijaz were asked to issue the *fatwas*. Usually, it was issued according to the desire of the applicant.

The absence of *Ijtihad* and the practice of imitation strengthened the roots of orthodoxy in India. The Indian *ulema* failed to produce any creative work. They just re-interpreted the works of their predecessors. Shah Wajihuddin (d.1590) was regarded a great religious scholar of India and the reason for his greatness was that he reviewed and paraphrased nearly all the important religious text-books.

There was no indigenous approach in issuing the *fatwas*. Mostly, the *fatwas* of the predecessors were repeated and scarcely and attempt was made to give a fresh opinion. The result was that Hanafi jurisprudence failed to respond to the challenges of the Indian Muslim society. Such an important book as Fatwa-i-Alamgiri contains nothing about the problems of India. There is no *fatwa* related to Indian political, social, or economic problems. In the compilation of the book the *ulema* imitated rather than interpreted the changing society of Muslim India.

The stagnation and rigidity made the *ulema* intolerant towards other sects. They opposed anything which was new or

modern. With the help of state power they suppressed all enlightened movements, and silenced their opponents by murdering them, burning their books, or imprisoning and torturing them. They persuaded the ruler not to appoint persons whose religious views were doubtful.

The other Muslims sects were suspected of conspiring against the *Sunni* state and a systematic propaganda was launched against them. Usually, these sects were scandalised by their free sexual activities and were called *Abahiya* or *Libertine*. These sects were not allowed to preach their faith or even to discuss their views freely. The result of this intolerant policy was that most of these sects went underground and kept everything related to them secret. This provided the *ulema* an opportunity to spread rumours and provoke people against them. The sporadic sectarian riots were the result of this policy. These sects remained insecure and rejected by the *Sunni ulema*'s effort to incorporate in the community.

Because the *ulema* failed to solve the problems of the changing society, therefore in order to keep their domination and preserve the orthodoxy, they ruthlessly crushed all such movements which tried to present a new interpretation or set up new traditions in Islam. All such movements were condemned as *Qaramati, Zindiqi*, or atheistic.

The result of the suppression was that all those persons who were enlightened or progressive kept silent and no power remained to challenge the forces of orthodoxy. Religious backwardness made the Muslim community dependent on the foreign *ulema*. Like politics, in religion too, they looked outside India for guidance.

Failure of the Muslim orthodoxy in Medieval India

In Medieval India, the whole educational system was

controlled by the *ulema*, who, after getting financial support from the government, set up their own *madrassas* or religious schools to train the young generation in religious sciences.

Usually, the nobility did not send their children to these schools. They were only for the lower classes. The courses which were selected for these schools aimed to strengthen the orthodoxy. There was no possibility to challenge the conventional traditions or to offer a new interpretation.

All sciences which caused skepticism were excluded from the syllabus. Especially, the discipline of philosophy was abhorred by the *ulema* and it was not included in the courses taught in the schools. Sheikh Abdul Haq Mahadis, a great religious scholar, condemned philosophy and saw no utility in its studies. He believed that all the philosophers were misguided people; therefore, they should not be trusted.

Ahmad Sirhindi, another religious scholar, also repeated the same views in his letters and pointed out the contradictions between the teachings of the prophets and the philosophers. He warned that following the philosophers would lead towards infidelity. Ahmad Sirhindi also condemned the subjects of mathematics and regarded it as a useless subject.

The consensus of the *ulema* was that all such sciences which were no helpful in understanding religion should not be studied. Therefore, all secular sciences were excluded from the syllabus and the students were not encouraged to study them. These views were expressed by another religious scholar. Imam Abdul Aziz, who visited India during Muhammad Tughluq's period. He regarded physics and mathematics as antithetical to religious beliefs. He appealed that only such subjects should be studied that helped to promote religion and the *Shariat*.

The *ulema* always strongly opposed the philosophers and warned the Muslims not to be influenced by their teachings. Maulana Mubarak Ghaznavi advised Sultan Iltutmish not to

allow any philosopher to stay in his kingdom. He requested him to ban the teaching of philosophy throughout his kingdom. He further urged the Sultan to insult and humiliate all such persons who opposed the *Sunni* faith and not to appoint anybody on government post whose religious beliefs were doubtful.

Ziauddin Barani, a historian of the Sultanate period, expressed his sorrow that Sultan Muhammad Tughluq favoured some philosophers and logicians. He named them as *Saad*, the logician, the irreligious; *Ubaid*, the poet, the unbeliever; and *Najm*, the philosopher. He complained that the Sultan was impressed by Maulana Alimuddin, who was a great philosopher, and had lost his faith under the influence of his teachings. He attributed all problems and crises which marred the reign of Muhammad Tughluq to the teaching of the philosopher and logicians.

The result of this approach was that all natural sciences and secular subjects were excluded from the teaching and only those subjects were taught which strengthened religion and the *Shariat*. Thus, this system failed to produce any scientists, architect, artists, or physician.

Moreover, the *ulema* strongly disapproved of music, dance, painting and sculpture. The result was that people who specialised in these arts were not given high social status in the society. On the contrary, the artists had a sense of guilt in practising these arts and regarded themselves as sinners. Consequently the musicians, dancers, dramatists and the singers could not become respectable and were looked down upon by the society.

Nearly all the arts were confined to the entertainment of the nobility and a majority of the people remained deprived of enjoyment from these arts. It was always emphasised that sword was the source of power while music was responsible for accelerating the process of decline. The anti-artistic attitude was

the great obstacle in refining the sentiments and feelings of the society while the warlike attitude made people crude and hard.

The *ulema* kept Arabic language as the language of religion. They expressed their views in the same language and wrote all books, pamphlets and *fatwas* in Arabic, Persian was given secondary status, but all the local languages were completely ignored. Shah Walliullah in his testament wrote that those who were well-versed in the Arabic language were fortunate people, because only the knowledge of the Arabic language helped in understanding the Quran. To read poetry, logic, and to study the history of the kings and to take interest in the disputes of the companions of the Prophet (PBUH) was to misguide oneself.

In India, the *ulema*, with the help of state power, did not give any chance to the secular sciences to grow and challenge the stagnated society. The educational system kept the Muslims community backward and religious prejudices, intolerance, and narrow-mindedness ultimately broke up the whole society, making it vulnerable to easy defeat by the western powers.

With the decline of political power, the influence of the orthodoxy weakened. The *ulema* struggled hard to survive; but the political social and economic vicissitudes dwindled their power. In the later Mughal period, the great exponent of the orthodoxy, Shah Walliullah, was fighting a losing battle. He made a number of attempts to revive the state power in order to get its support, but all his efforts failed. Even his attempt to invite Ahmad Shah Abdali to restore the Mughal power failed and the process of political decline of the Mughals could not be stopped.

The question is why did Shah Walliullah fail to inspire the Muslim elite to unite and struggle for its survival? He appealed to the Muslim elite to gather together in the name of

religion to revive its old glory. What he did not realise was that the religion was itself responsible for curbing all creative potentialities of the Muslim society. The tradition of imitating blindly and not applying religion to relevant problems, left no appeal of religion for the society to use it in heir practical life. The lack of creativeness made the whole society stagnant and felt no energy to face the rising nations or to respond to the new challenges effectively.

Shah Walliullah relied on the ruling classes to rescue the Muslim society from degradation. He was hopeful that the military Muslim adventurers had enough resources and power to fight against the *Sikhs, Marhatas, Jats* and the *Rajputs*.

Therefore, he urged Muslim soldiers and Muslim rulers to fight a holy war against the infidels and save Islam in the Indian subcontinent. Addressing the Muslim rulers, he pointed out that it was the divine will that they must draw their swords and continue to fight until the annihilation of the unbelievers. He urged them to fight until the religion of Allah would prevail all over the world.

He tried his best to infuse a spirit of the holy war among the Muslim soldiers. He was greatly disappointed to see that instead of fighting for Allah, the soldiers adopted fighting as a profession and their object was just to accumulate wealth. They had deviated from the right path by drinking wine, shaving the beards, having long moustaches, and eating anything without knowing what was lawful and what was not.

Shah Walliullah's appeal proved to be a voice in the wilderness. The hard economic realities could not inspire the soldiers to fight in the name of religion. Religion had completely lost its charm and had failed to activate people. The orthodoxy blocked all intellectual development in the Muslim society. The *Sunni* majority alienated the other sects and removed them from the mainstream by suppressing them.

Therefore, with the decline of the political power, the decline of the *ulema* was imminent because they never deepened their roots among the people and had joined hands with the state power.

Failure of the *ulema* in Mughal India

Akbar was the first Mughal ruler who realised that the Mughal government could not be consolidated only by the Muslim nobility. Therefore, he recruited the *Rajputs* and other high caste Hindus in the service of the Mughal dynasty which provided a new strength to it and it became a symbol of the Hindus-Muslim unity.

Akbar also followed a policy of religious tolerance and, to win the hearts of the common Hindus, abolished all religious taxes. He, as a ruler of India, fully believed that India could not be ruled over by one group of people. The basis of the government should be broadened and different religious social, and cultural groups should be allowed to participate in the government institutions.

The participation of Hindus in the Mughal administration not only strengthened it but gave a new life to the cultural and social traditions and institutions. Akbar made an attempt to deepen the roots of the Muslims in the Indian soil and cut off their dependence on foreign help.

Most of the *Sunni* nobles were hurt by this policy of integration because they wished to control the whole administration and enjoy all privileges by themselves without giving any share to anybody. To counter this policy, they launched a campaign with the help of the *ulema* and tried to strike off all symbols of unity.

They not only opposed the Hindus, but criticised the involvement of the *Shias* in the affairs of the government.

Maulana Ubaidullah Sindhi, analysing the roots of this conflict wrote that Bokhara was the intellec ıal and political centre of the foreign Muslim group in India. All books of jurisprudence, philosophy and logic came from Bokhara as textbooks and helped to shape the mind of the educated Muslims as Central Asians rather than as Indians. Similarly, influential groups, constantly immigrated from Central Asia to provide a new strength to the Muslim community in India.

When Akbar appointed the Hindus in the administration and entrusted them important affairs of the government, it created an uproar among the foreign-origin Muslims because they did not like to share power with the Hindus. The other factor which greatly dissatisfied them was the presence of the *Shias* at the Mughal court. The people of Central Asia were staunch *Sunnis* and opposed *Shiaism*. Therefore, their concern was how to reduce the influence of the Hindus and the *Shias* and how to maintain their permanent domination at the court.

The leader of this movement was Ahmad Sirhindi known as Mujaddad Alifthani. He believed that the *Shias*, *Mahdawis*, and the mystics were responsible for the decline of *Sunni* Muslim unity in India. The external forces which threatened Islam included the Hindus whose cultural influence polluted Islam. He were fully supported by the *Sunni* nobility whose interests were threatened by the *Shias* and the Hindus. A letter, which was written by Ahmad Sirhindi to a Mughal noble, Sheikh Farid, indicated his approach about how to deal with the Hindus.

In the letter he wrote that the superiority and respect of Islam could be asserted only by humiliating the infidels. If anybody maintained friendly relations with the unbelievers, it meant that he would render irreparable loss to Islam. The unbelievers should not be respected and honoured, but on the contrary, insulted and degraded. They should be treated like

dogs and a distance from them should be kept. In his letters, Ahmad Sirhindi lamented that infidels were free to perform their religious rituals; they were free to build temples and the cow slaughter was wrongly banned.

He believed that only the *Sunni* community should be given religious freedom and all the followers of other religions and sects should be completely suppressed. He especially opposed the *Shia* and regarded their existence as a threat to the *Sunni* community. Professor Mujib, analysing his role, commented that his followers eulogised his role and attributed many achievements to him which he did not deserve.

He is projected as the champion of *Sunni* orthodoxy against the tolerant policy of Akbar and credited with Islamising the ceremonies of the Mughal court. Nearly all these achievements were wrongly attributed to him. However, credit should be given to him for sowing the seeds of *Sunni-Shia* conflict in India and helping to deepen the roots of orthodoxy. He tried his best to stop the process of integration and emphasised on the separation of the Hindus and Muslims. He was not famous among his contemporaries and his teachings were confine only to his followers. But after Partition, his teachings were rediscovered to get ideological support for the two-nation theory and the policy of separation. He has become a hero of the reactionary forces who found in him the spokesman of their ideas. His role is highlighted and his achievements are exaggerated in order to consolidate the orthodoxy in Pakistan.

However, the *Sunni* nobles at the court of the Mughals were succeeded when Aurangzeb became the ruler and the orthodoxy found its champion. The *Sunni ulema*, under Aurangzeb, launched a campaign against all enlightened movements and suppressed them with the help of the state power. The orthodoxy was consolidated after the compilation of

the *Fatwa-i-Alamgiri*. The *ulema* fully cooperated with Aurangzeb and when he needed a *fatwa* against Dara Shikoh, it was promptly issued by the *ulema*.

However, the orthodoxy and religious revivalism could not stop the process of Mughal decline. The *ulema* failed to guide the government or the Muslim society. On the contrary they kept busy in accumulating wealth and enjoying material benefits granted to them by the government. On the death of Qazi Abdul Wahab (d.1675) it was discovered that he left behind one lakh *ashrafis* and Rs. 5 lakh besides jewels and ornaments. Thus, the *ulema*, under state patronage, collected money and opposed any change in the society by supporting the status quo.

The experiment of Islamisation and the interference of the *ulema* in the affairs of the state during Aurangzeb's time is the best example of how the whole process instead of giving stability to the Mughals, accelerated the process of decline. The *ulema* proved incapable of understanding the complex problems and led the society towards total failure.

The sufis and the Indian Society

All mystic orders such as *Chishtiya, Suhrawardiya, Qadriya, Naqshbandiya,* and *Firdausiya* originated in Iran, Iraq, and Central Asia, and their followers brought them to India. Out of these orders, three became very popular in India; they were the *Chishtiya, Suhrawardiya* and *Qadriya*.

The reason of their popularity was their non-Arabic character and tolerance to adopt other than Arab practices. They believed in *Wahdat-al-wujud* which united Indian society where Hindus and Muslims lived together. These mystic orders specially became popular in the lower classes because they provided a justification for their social integration.

During the Mughal period, as reaction to the social integration between the Hindus and Muslims the mystic order of the *Naqshbandiya* asserted its authority and opposed all attempts of Hindu-Muslim unity and launched a campaign to impose he *Shariat* and separate these two communities. Ahmad Sirhindi was the great exponent of this order and was supported by the *Sunni* nobles whose interest was to exclude the Hindus and the *Shia* from the state institutions.

As a reaction of the intolerance policy of the *ulema*, different mystic orders emerged known as *Shatariya*, *Madariya*, and the *Qalandars* who openly violated the *Shariat* and opposed religious rituals and customs. They believed that *Shariat* could not improve the quality of life; on the contrary, it restricted human freedom and made a person prisoner of rules and regulations. They believed in complete freedom. The orders consisted of the followers of every religion and sect.

Because of their Bohemian way of life the *ulema* and the government condemned them and regarded them as ignorant riff-raff. As they posed no serious political threat to the government, they were ignored and no importance was attached to their activities.

The reason for the popularity of the *sufis* was the arrogant attitude of the *ulema*, who looked down upon the downtrodden people and hated the infidels. On the other hand, the *sufis* preached tolerance and advised the rulers to treat both Hindus and Muslims alike. Sheikh Muhibullah (d. 1648) persuaded Shahjahan that Hindus and Muslims were the creation of God, so he must love them both.

Most of the *sufis* adopted music and dance to popularise their teaching which consequently broke the stagnation and created movement in life. Music and the poetry roused the feelings of the people and life no more remained dull; it became meaningful and charming. Music and dance made the

monasteries of *sufis* popular among the people.

The *sufis* fulfilled the political, social, and economic needs of the people. After the conquest of India, when the local people converted to Islam, the new religion created a gap in their lives because the concept of God in Islam was different from Hinduism. There was no form of God who could replace their idols. In the absence of this, the *sufis* filled the gap because they were regarded as supernatural, and miraculous powers were attributed to them. They not only helped fulfil human desires but helped cure the sick people. They also played the role of go-between for God and the people. This made them respectable.

Therefore, in a society where there were a number of economic and social problems incurable diseases, and all sorts of deprivation, the people had to believe in miracles to solve their problems. This was the reason that the monasteries of the *sufis* became centres of lower and downtrodden people who thronged to the *sufis* in the hope to find solutions for their problems.

Another reason for the popularity of the *sufis* was that after conversion to Islam, the lower classes could not get equal social status in the Muslim community. This greatly disturbed them because they left their religion and caste and found no equal status in the Muslim social order. These people found in the monasteries of the *sufis* and the *sufi* orders a sense of brotherhood which replaced their caste and gave them a status in the society.

Thus, it was the social need of the lower classes which was satisfied by the institution of the *sufi* order. The people paid back in gratitude by eulogising the *sufi* and making him a superman. As a result of these feelings the *sufi*'s real character disappeared and a myth is woven around him which makes him a non-historical person.

The role of the *sufi* in social history

In a political system where the king was absolute and the high-rank officials were not directly accessible, people required an intermediary to approach them. This source was found in the person of a *sufi* and in the institution of the monastery which helped the people to make contact with the administration. As a number of high-ranking administrators and nobles were the devotees of a *sufi*, they visited him at his monastery to pay their homage and came into contact with the people, who conveyed their grievances and problems to them either directly or through the *Sheikh* of the monastery.

Most of the followers of a *sufi* requested him to submit their applications to the king. It is said that when Sheikh Ruknuddin Abdul Fath, who belonged to the *Suhrawardi* order, went to the court, people threw their applications in his planaquin. He had instructed his personal servant to hand over these applications in the presence of the king so that he could get the sanction then and there.

Another, *sufi*, Makhdum Jihaniyan, also took the applications from the needy people and presented them to Firuz Shah for the favourable order. Especially, during the Mughal rule, the relationship of the *sufis* and the Mughals were very cordial and, therefore, they conveyed the grievances and complaints of the people to the rulers. This role made the *sufi* popular and people rushed to their monasteries in the hope of an access to the authorities.

If a prince or a great noble became a devotee of a *sufi*, the number of his followers increased because of the fact of belonging to the same brotherhood. The people could persuade the prince or noble to help them. Ahmad Sirhindi, in his letters to the Mughal nobles, recommended the cases of his disciples and urged the nobles to help them.

Thus, in India, the monastery became an institution fully patronised by the rulers and nobles who financially supported it and gave it precious gifts. It was the practice that a monastery daily received different types of gifts and hard cash, which was immediately distributed among the needy people. The result was that a number of poor people remained present in the hope of getting their share from their charity. This practice enhanced the image of the *sufi* who emerged as the supporter of the poor and helper of the needy.

Moreover, every monastery had boarding and lodging facilities for disciples and visitors. This provided great relief to the wretched and the poor people. They got shelter and food for a few days and moved from one monastery to another. To stay in a monastery meant to get a share from the charity because the famous *sufis* used to get a number of gifts and cash money daily from the king and the nobility.

It was said that Nizamuddin Auliya's monastery received valuable gifts and hard cash which he distributed immediately among his disciples and visitors. Those who were present received something and were never disappointed. There were nearly three thousand religious scholars, students, and *huffaz* who were financially supported by him. Besides them, there were two hundred *qawwals* who received regular stipend.

As most of the *sufis* enjoyed good relations with the rulers, they lived a luxurious life, as Sheikh Gaisu Daraz and Sheikh Ahmad Khato.

The *sufis* always collaborated with the ruling classes and never opposed or rebelled against the ruler, neither did they criticise the political system or condemn the exploitation of the masses. Whosoever assumed power, they recognised him as a lawful ruler. Nizamuddin Auliya, who saw so many political upheavals, never indulged in the politics and recognised all those who either usurped the throne or captured it by sheer

military power, such as Alauddin Khilji and Khusru Khan.

The *sufis* fully realised that their existence depended on their neutral role; therefore, they kept themselves aloof from the active politics and supported the status quo. In a way, they strengthened the existing system by alleviating the feelings of the have-nots by advising them to engage themselves in worship and to suppress all kinds of desires and ambitions. They created a hatred for this world and emphasised the 'preparation' through spiritual exercise for the next world. They encouraged their disciples to bear all political, social and economic injustices and never to raise their voice against exploitation. Under the influence of their teachings, the society became submissive and docile and submitted to the tyranny of the time.

The *sufi* also failed to change the social structure of the society. The difference between *Ashraf* (Nobles) and *Ajlaf* (lower classes) remained unchallenged and the caste hierarchy was maintained. No attempt was made to restore the dignity of man in the society. Everybody was satisfied with what destiny had made him. The result was that the disciples of the *sufi* were content about the social and economic conditions and had no desire to change it. The deprived and the have-nots were so satisfied by their spiritual attainment that they never conceived of resisting. They submitted themselves to their destiny and remained serene and satisfied in the hope of getting rewards in the next world.

That was the reason that the mystics and their teachings helped the rulers and the system to remain intact. It was in their interests to patronise them and provide them financial help. A strong relationship was established between the ruler and the *sufis*. The ruler fulfilled their requirements while the *sufis* preached complete submission to the state.

We can safely conclude that the *sufi* strengthened the stagnation of the society and suppressed all attempts of change.

4

THE MUSLIMS UNDER THE BRITISH RULE

The Muslim response to British rule

At the time of the Mughal decline, the Muslim society was completely fossilised. Although the state institution, political system, social and cultural traditions were affected by the change of the ruling dynasties and political upheavals, their roots remained deep and no radical change brought any transformation in their structure.

In the later Mughal period, the *Marhatas, Jats, Rajputs*, and *Sikhs* challenged the political hegemony of the Muslim ruling classes, but they preferred to disintegrate rather than reform their political and social system. Loyalty to the king, privileges of the nobility, the concept of superiority of a family, degradation of women, rigidity of religious views, differences between rural and urban cultures, contradiction between different classes, beliefs in the miraculous powers of the saints, and all kinds of superstitions remained intact and deep-rooted in the Muslim society.

The society failed to respond to the challenges. Intellectually it became stagnant. There was no urge to change and no wish to reform. Neither had it courage to adapt itself in the changing world. It was exhausted and ready to succumb to death.

Under these circumstances, the English came to power and slowly consolidated their political domination. In the beginning, no attempt was made by the British to introduce any radical change in the Indian society, but later on their requirements and interests compelled them to reform, change, and transform the political and administrative structure which consequently disturbed the social and economic institutions.

As foreigners and belonging to a different race, it was in their interest to invent a creed to justify their rule over India. Their strategy was to challenge and denigrate the cultural and social traditions of India in order to assert their cultural superiority.

Their approach was that as the Indians were ruled by oriental despots, their intellectual creativity and growth was greatly damaged and made the whole society backward. The destiny had condemned them to be ruled by the foreigners. British rule was a blessing to the Indians because their rule introduced them to western civilisation and helped them to become modern and cultured.

The Muslim society was specially attacked on cultural, and religious fronts. For the Muslims, it was the first serious challenge, because so far, they were not criticised as they had political power and the state protected them from all opponents. After losing state power they became vulnerable and were attacked by all sides.

First, it was said that their whole ruling period was despotic and intolerant to the non-Muslims. Therefore the end of the Muslim rule meant an end of despotism and a relief to the non-Muslims. Secondly, their religion was attacked and condemned as a collection of backward and obsolete traditions antithetical to modern values. Further, their social and cultural institutions were regarded as an obstacle in making them enlightened and liberal.

Therefore, with the political domination of the British the whole Muslim society was affected. Muslim states were occupied, Muslim ruling dynasties were deprived of political power, the nobility lost all its privileges, laws of inheritance were changed, the system of revenue was reformed, a new judicial system was introduced, the educational system was transformed, and the administrative structure was overhauled. These reforms and changes broke the stagnation of the society and forced the people to wake up from their slumber.

There were, however, different reactions of the British rule and British challenges. In South India, the Muslims were mostly merchants and as merchants they were flexible to compromise with the changing situation. They recognised the British superiority and started to learn their language and culture. The response in Northern India was different. Here, the Muslims were the pillars of the feudal system and were proud of belonging to the conquering race. They resisted the recognition of British rule but as they did not have power to resist, they silently retreated and alienated themselves from the mainstream. It was a frustrated reaction of a defeated community which was fearful of any new change and refused to recognise the changing situation. Because of this lack of response, the Muslim community suffered and paid a heavy price.

The *Jihad* Movement

The first response to the political domination of the British was the attempt to establish a separate Islamic state in the North-West Frontier and to expand it to the Punjab where the *Sikhs* were ruling. The movement was initiated by Sayyid Ahmad Brailvi (d. 1831) and it was known in history as the *Jihad Tehrik*. He found a favourable response to his movement

as nearly all the classes of the Muslim community were greatly dissatisfied by the political, social, and economic changes.

Once the fabric of the society was broken, everybody from the feudal to the artisan suffered and found it difficult to adjust in the new atmosphere. The political power of the British made them helpless. Muslim states not occupied by the English also recognised British sovereignty, thus leaving them no option but to submit. All their resources were exhausted and within British India, the future of the Muslim looked bleak.

Under these circumstances, Sayyid Ahmad provided a new direction to the Muslim community by his spiritual teachings and assured the people that through spiritual power they would attain political domination. Because of this approach, a large number of religious scholars were attracted to the *Jihad Tehrik* and even those who were more superior to Sayyid Ahmad in religious scholarship could bring a radical change and restore the lost honour of the Muslim community.

Initially, Sayyid Ahmad, mobilised the Muslims throughout India and then decided to start a holy war not in British India but against the *Sikhs*. The reason of his not fighting a holy war against the British was, that as there was no Imam of the Muslims in India, the war in the *Dar-al-Harab* would become a rebellion and not a *Jehad*. As the North-West Frontier was *Dar-al-Aman*, from there a Holy war could be started against the *Sikhs* who had occupied Punjab and kept the Muslims under their tutelage.

To provide moral justification for a holy war against the *Sikhs*, it was said that the *Sikhs* mistreated the Muslims and did not allow them to perform their religious duties. The *Sikh* government banned the *Azan* from the mosques; desecrated the Holy Quran; and used the mosques as their stables. Such propaganda mobilised and excited the Muslims to join the *Jehad* and take revenge against the *Sikhs*.

As the British government was not threatened by this movement, it did not create any obstacle, but on the contrary, supported him. Once somebody asked Sayyid Ahmad why he wanted to fight against the *Sikhs* and not the British. His reply was: "It is not our intention to usurp power from anybody, from the British or from the *Sikhs*. We want to fight a holy war against the *Sikhs* only because they tyrannise our brethren. Though the British government is not Islamic it treats the Muslims well and does not create any problem in performing their religious rituals. Therefore, their is no reason to fight against the British.

The British government provided all facilities to the holy warriors in order to go the Frontier and fight against the *Sikhs*. The British motives were clear: they wanted to finish the discontent of the Muslims by allowing them to be engaged with the *Sikhs* and weaken their power. History shows that they succeeded in achieving this end.

The *Jehad Tehrik* became more popular in North India and Bengal because the Muslims of these regions were badly affected socially, politically, and economically by the occupation of the British. The Muslims of other regions did not take much interest and remained aloof. In the Punjab, as the Muslims were on high posts in the *Sikh* administration and the army, they did not react. The *Talpur* rulers of Sindh were hesitant to help him as they received the news of Sayyid Ahmad's collaboration with the British. In Sindh, it was rumoured that he was a British agent.

The tribal chiefs of the Frontier also were not affected by the British rule; therefore, they failed to understand the purpose of the movement. The popularity and support of the movements, thus, remained confined only to North India and Bengal and that was the reason for its failure. The tribal chiefs of the Frontier reacted against the movement which disturbed

their social, political, and economic structure. The attitude of the British government changed as soon as they occupied the Punjab in 1849. After a series of trials from 1864 to 1870, the movement was completely crushed.

The *Jihad* movement fully indicates the psyche of the Indian Muslims who were not ready to integrate with the Indian nations and fight unitedly against the foreigners. The conflict with the *Sikhs* benefited the British and helped them to defeat the *Sikhs*, and occupy Punjab. In the end, the Muslims gained nothing but further broke up the community into different sections and made it incapable to fight anymore for the restoration of their lost dignity.

India : Dar-al-Harab or Dar-al-Aman?

With the establishment of the British rule, the *ulema* raised a question that whether India was *Dar-al-Harab* (abode of war) or *Dar-al-Aman* (abode of peace). Majority of the *ulema* declared India as Dar-al-Harab because under the British rule, the Muslims could not perform their religious duties freely and follow the precepts of the *shariat*.

Shah Abdul Aziz and Maulvi Abdul Hai issued *fatwas* and gave reasons to call India as *Dar-al-Harab*. Shah Abdul Aziz explains that: "When the unbelievers occupy a country and the Muslims fail to oust them or lose all hope to get rid of them; when the unbelievers gain such a power as to declare the Islamic laws legal or illegal; when nobody without their consent can receive the revenue; and when the Muslims cannot live in peace and harmony; in this case the country could become a *Dar-al-Harab*".

Maulvi Abdul Hai in his *fatwa* declares that: "The whole kingdom of the Christians from Calcutta to the North West Frontier is *Dar-al-Harab*. In every place the infidelity has

become strong and Muslim laws are neglected. These circumstances make a country *Dar-al-Harab*".

The result of this attitude was that some of the *ulema*, regarded India as unsuitable to their religious beliefs, immigrated to Hijaz, settled there, and started teaching in the religious schools. The Indian students, who went there for higher religious education, were impressed by their conservative thoughts and propagated them after their return to India. This process further consolidated the orthodoxy in India.

These *Fatwas* fully reflect the psyche of the Muslim community in India that they never regarded India as their homeland and considered it a mere residential place. Even after living there for centuries, the nostalgia of the ancestral land remained alive. As long as they had political power in India, these feelings remained dormant, but as soon as they lost the political power, the sense of insecurity and deprivation uprooted them from the Indian soil and the yearning to go back to their ancestral land became strong.

All of a sudden India had become a land of unbelief where it became impossible for them to remain a true Muslim. For the protection of their Islamic civilisation and culture, they wanted to migrate to Iran, Central Asia, and the Arab world. After declaring India as *Dar-al-Harab*, the Muslims preferred to escape rather than to stay and resist.

In this regard, the real tragedy was of the local Muslims, whose homeland was India but imitating the foreign origin Muslims, they also condemned India and were ready to abandon it to protect their religion in some foreign country.

Further, these *fatwas* indicate the lack of historical consciousness of the *ulema* who regarded the period of the Muslim ruling dynasties as Islamic and failed to understand the fact that the Muslim rulers never fully implemented the *shariat* and violated it whenever their interest contradicted it

The consequence of these *fatwas* was that once India became a *Dar-al-Harab*, it became incumbent upon every Muslim either to fight a holy war and convert it from *Dar-al-Harab* to *Dar-al-Aman* or to immigrate to a Muslim country. More problems were created, as there was no *Imam* of the Muslims and neither they had any organisation, the declaration of the holy war was not possible.

Therefore, the decision lay on the individual interest of the Muslims. The result was that those Muslims who profited by the British rule regarded it as *Dar-al-Aman* and those who suffered because of it declared it as *Dar-al-Harab*. Two religious movements, *Fraizi* and *Jihad Tahrik*, proclaimed India as, *Dar-al-Harab* with the reason that the Muslims could perform their religious duties only in those countries where they were in majority or to have political power. Therefore, in India, either they fight for the establishment of the Islamic state or leave the country. Thus, the problem of *Dar-al-Harab* or *Dar-al-Aman* played a significant role in the Muslim politics of India.

Sir Syed : the policy of collaboration

The religious and militant movements were started by Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed. Haji Shariatullah and Dudu Miyan failed to achieve their objects. The British administration, analysing these movements, concluded that the Muslims of India were extremists and had no toleration; therefore, they should be isolated from other Indian nations and suppressed thoroughly in order to make them incapable of resisting anymore.

At the same time a group of Muslims emerged who realised that the British could not be ousted by military power. Therefore, to get concessions from them, a policy of

collaboration was required. The supporters of this new policy were the great feudals who suffered as a result of *Jihad* and the *Fraizi* movements. As these movements mobilised the common Muslims to rebel and to fight for their rights, the feudal class was threatened with loss of privilege and high position.

Therefore, it was not in their interest to adopt any resistance or violent methods, but to submit and recognise the political domination of the British. To achieve this, the Muslim community was assured that India was not *Dar-al-Harab* but *Dar-al-Aman*. Maulvi Karamat Ali, a Bengali Muslim, argued that, as the Muslim personal law was implemented in India, it rendered *Jihad* obsolete.

Sir Syed followed this argument and said that as the Muslims had full religious freedom, it was not incumbent upon them to declare *Jihad* against the British. In his opinion technically, India was neither *Dar-al-Harab* nor *Dar-al-Aman*. Maulvi Chiragh Ali, a famous religious scholar, said that the discussion of *Dar-al-Harab* and *Dar-al-Aman* was useless in the changing world, India had became a British India; this fact should be recognised by the Indian Muslims.

Sir Syed Ahmad, realising the needs of the Muslim feudal class, emphasised collaboration with the British. He and his companions brilliantly argued their case and convinced the Muslim nobility to compromise with the changing situation in order to maintain their old status in the society. Sir Syed was the first Indian Muslim who introduced the progressive and rational interpretation of Islam. He did not talk about the revival of Islam but about adjusting Islamic teachings with new scientific values.

He argued that Islam was not a backward religion but rational in its approach; it had the flexibility to adjust with modernism. To justify this point of view, he interpreted the Quran with a scientific and radical outlook. He defended

Islamic institutions against all criticism which the western scholars made and responded effectively to all their challenges. The progressive interpretation of Islam was further carried on by Chiragh Ali and Syed Ameer Ali.

In the process of collaboration with the British, Sir Syed tried his best to cut off all connections of the Indian Muslims with the Muslim world. He stressed that they should first think about the preservation of their interests. He wrote an article on the institution of the Khilafat and proved that it had lost its relevance and the caliph remained no more spiritual or temporal head of the Muslims, therefore, the Indian Muslims were not required to pay any allegiance to the caliph. As British subjects, it was their duty to obey and cooperate with the government.

Usually there is a misunderstanding that Sir Syed was first in introducing western education among the Muslims. On the contrary, modern education had become popular among the Muslims of North and a large number of Muslim students took admission in government schools. At that time their number was more than the Hindu students. But these students belonged to the Muslim middle class.

The Muslim nobility refused to send their children to these schools because they had to sit along with other lower class students on the same bench. As a matter of fact, Sir Syed convinced the Muslim nobility to get modern education in order to get social and political domination. As the Aligarh College was founded under the patronage of the British, the Muslim nobility did not hesitate to send their children there. This made Aligarh a centre of British loyalists.

The Indian Muslims and foreign help

The attachment of the Indian Muslims to the Muslims

ummah and the movement of Pan-Islamism, alienated them on the one hand, from the Indian nations, and on the other hand, made them dependent on the Muslim world to help them against the British. They assumed that as all Muslims were brothers, they would be rescued by their brethren whenever they called them for help.

The assumption of the outside Muslim help was the result of their immaturity. They were not fully aware of the political, social, and economic conditions of these Muslim countries whose assistance they wanted to seek.

The Arab countries had lost their political power after being incorporated in the Ottoman empire and they were resisting Turkish domination for their own independence. In Iran, under the Qajar dynasty, corruption and anarchy were prevalent and the government was not able to defend the country against European imperial designs. Afghanistan was isolated from the rest of the world and was regarded as the most backward country. The Ottoman empire was facing the process of its decline and was incapable of helping others.

The Muslims of India were ignorant of the backwardness of the Muslim countries and started most of their movements on the assumption of their help. For example, in the beginning of the Silken Handkerchief Movement, it was assumed that India could be liberated with the help of Turkey and Afghanistan. They never analysed that the roots of British imperialism were deep and the British excelled not only in military weapons but in political intrigues as well. They also did not care to know the reaction and feelings of other Indian nations in their attempt to oust the British and re-establish Muslim rule in India.

When the first mission reached Afghanistan the Muslims of India came to know the real political, social, and economic conditions of the country they had so admired. At

that time (1912-13), the whole population of Afghanistan was 80 lakh and the rate of literacy was only 1%. There were no post and telegraph departments. In the whole of Afghanistan, there was only one telephone line which was reserved for the Amir of Afghanistan.

The condition of the army was miserable. They neither had guns nor modern weapons. There was no discipline in the army and the soldiers were paid irregularly. Amir Habibullah ruled over the country with an iron hand and did not tolerate institutions such as parliament or cabinet. The deplorable condition shocked the Indian Muslims who hoped to get military help from Afghanistan against the British. Zafar Hassan, a member of the mission, who later on wrote an autobiography, said: "We had great expectations that Afghanistan would help us in our struggle for freedom against the British but on our arrival we saw that nobody had any knowledge about the war. The people were completely ignorant about what would happen. When we tried to purchase stationary, we were told that there was no such shop in the city. Paper was available at the butcher's shop. Pen and ink were unknown to them."

He was further shocked when he came to know that neither were there judicial courts, judges, nor advocates to defend the accused. Such was the knowledge of the Indian Muslims about Afghanistan. About the Arab world and Turkey they were completely in the dark. The result was that one of the members of this movement, Maulana Mahmud-al-Hassan was imprisoned in Malta on the report of the *Sharif-i-Makkha*.

But the Muslims of India did not learn any lesson from the failure of the Silken Handkerchief Movement, and after the First World War, when Turkey was defeated by the Allies, they supported the Ottoman empire and threatened the British government that if the caliph was not treated well they would as

a protest migrate to Afghanistan.

After the First World War, in 1920, again the question of *Dar-al-Harab* and *Dar-al-Aman* was raised. This time Maulana Abdul Bari of Frangi Mahal issued a *fatwa* declaring India as *Dar-al-Harab* and urged the Muslims to migrate. Maulana Azad also appealed to the Muslims to leave India as their religiously duty. The result of these *fatwas* was that a great number of Muslims, after selling their properties, migrated to Afghanistan.

They were followed by most of the poor people who expected to get good economic opportunities there. What happened to these unfortunate people is told by Zafar Hassan: "The caravans of people reached Jalalabad and Kabul one after the other..... the *pardah*-observing of Kabul. Some people sold each and everything just to get food". The *Hijrat* Movement also failed miserably to achieve any results.

Both movements, Silken Handkerchief and *Hijrat*, were the result of the political immaturity of the Indian Muslims. Both movements were started on assumptions, without knowing the real facts. Those *ulema*, who issued the *fatwas* for the Hijrat, did not migrate themselves and caused the destruction of thousands of Muslim families. However, the Muslims as a whole did not learn any lesson even from this tragedy.

India Muslims and the Muslim Ummah

As long as the ruling Muslim dynasties remained politically strong and kept the interest of the Muslim community secured in India, they isolated themselves from the political crises of the Muslim world and never showed the feelings of solidarity towards other Muslim nations.

After the conquest of Central Asia by the Mongols, Jalaluddin Khawarizm Shah came to India seeking help against

Chengiz Khan, but Iltutmish refused to give him asylum and politely told him that "the climate of the country is not suitable to your Majesty."

Similarly, the Mughals remained neutral in the wars which were fought between the Ottomans and the *Safawids*. The Arab envoys who used to come to the Mughal court always asked for valuable gifts and hard cash; therefore they were not respected and were looked down by the Mughal authorities.

A new Muslim psyche developed when their political power declined and they found themselves helpless before the other rising Indian nations. At this stage, they started looking outside for help and appealed to Muslim powers of Afghanistan, Iran and Turkey to rescue them from these political crises. They lost the inner confidence and their dependence on outside help increased. They, instead of solving their own problems, heavily relied on the Muslim world and recognised the Ottoman caliph as their spiritual and temporal leader.

The crisis of 1857 further caused the Muslim society to disintegrate and they not only lost political power but culturally became backward. The British isolated them from the other Indian nations and abandoned them to their fate. Under these circumstances, they, on the one hand, took refuge in the glorious Islamic past and, on the other hand, attached their interests to the Muslim *Ummah*.

Shibli Nomani fulfilled the first requirement and portrayed a romantic picture of the achievements of the Islamic civilisation. Abdul Halim Sharar, Rashid-al-Kheri, and Hakim Muhammad Ali wrote historical novels and enthralled the Muslim community by narrating Islamic conquests.

Abdul Razzaq Kanpuri, following the footsteps of Shibli, resurrected the Muslim heroes Al-Bramaka and Nizam-ul-Mulk. These traditions were carried on by our poets Hali and

Iqbal. Hali, in his emotional *Mussadas*, poignantly narrates the rise and fall of the Muslims.

Iqbal was more Impressed by the architectural beauty of the mosque of Qurtaba and composed a long philosophical poem which saddened the Muslims of India about the rise appreciate the beauty and grandeur of the Shahi Mosque of Lahore where he was destined to be buried.

The Muslim community of India loved the outside Muslims more than their own neighbours belonging to other religions. The emotional attachment to the Muslim world and the Muslim *ummah* deepened to that extent that they owned anything which was Muslim and disowned everything which was Indian. Even the history of Muslim ruling dynasties in India was belittled in comparison to Islamic history.

Sir Syed was the only person who realised that this attitude would bring disaster to the Muslims of India and he tried to create in them a sense of 'Indianness' but he was opposed by all the Muslim leaders. Abul Kalam Azad wrote a letter to Khawaja Hassan Nizami and bemoaned the fact that Aligarh rendered the Muslim incapable of doing anything. He believed that nationalist movements were harmful to the interest of the Indian Muslims and only the unity of the Muslim world and international Muslim movement would rescue them from their present misery.

In the early stage, Azad was a fervent believer of Muslim unity. This is indicated in his language which is full of Arabic and Persian words incomprehensible to an ordinary educated Indian Muslim. His style was followed by many other writers and the result was that an Arabicised Urdu came into being which further limited the circle of Urdu reading public. Moreover, this style checked the process of integration of Urdu with Indian languages and helped to make Urdu the language of the Indian Muslims.

Indian Muslims and the politico-religious movements

During the British rule, Indian Muslims recognised the Ottoman caliph as their spiritual leader and made efforts to preserve this institution at the cost of their own internal problems. Abul Kalam Azad, defending the importance of the institution, expressed the opinion that it was the religious duty of every Muslim to obey the caliph, and if the institution was threatened by a non-Muslims aggression, the Muslim *ummah* should unitedly defend it. He warned that any hesitation in compliance of this would lead to a grave sin.

The movement, which was launched to preserve the institution of the caliphate, indicates the lack of political consciousness of the Indian Muslims. They believed that the Ottoman empire was the symbol of Islamic grandeur and its weakness would consequently weaken the Muslim *ummah*. In November 1920, Maulana Mahmud-al-Hassan spoke on the Ottoman empire and its greatness and said that the Ottoman empire was the only empire which kept the Islamic glory alive. He further said that the Ottoman caliph was recognised by the Muslims of the world as their spiritual leader because he performed the duties of the caliphate admirably.

These statements show lack of knowledge of Turkish history. The Ottoman empire was declining rapidly before the rising of European powers and the institution of the caliphate had already lost its power and influence over the Muslims world. There were movements within Turkey against the caliphate, which was regarded as an obstacle to modernism. When the Ottoman caliph surrendered before the Allies and signed a treaty on demeaning terms, Mustafa Ataturk launched a campaign against the caliphate and ultimately abolished it in 1924.

As the Indian Muslims were not aware of the political condition of Turkey they supported the caliphate which had already lost its utility. The result of the Khilafat Movement in India was that the Indian Muslims ignored their own social and political problems and wasted their energies in a movement which had no connection with their problems.

The abolition of the caliphate did not prevent the Muslim leaders from using Pan-Islamic symbols to mobilise the Muslim masses. It was propagated that after the end of the caliphate, the Muslims had become leaderless. It was said that the Muslims could overcome their grievances only when they would have a leader. To achieve this, Maulana Azad launched a campaign that the Muslims of India should choose an *Imam* to lead them in all matters; religious as well as worldly.

Sayyid Suleiman Nadvi, another religious scholar, proposed that the post of *Shaikhul Islam* should be instituted by the government with a good salary.

All such proposals did not materialise. It was well nigh impossible to get the unity of the *ulema* on the recognition of an *Imam*. The result was that the followers of different *ulema* started to call their leaders *Imam*, such as the admirers of Azad referred to him as *Imamal-Hind*, and the supporters of Ataullah Shah Bokhari called him *Amir-i-Shariat*. This was followed by a number of *Imams* and *Amirs* who divided the Muslim community into different groups.

The tragedy of the Indian Muslims was that all political decisions were taken on the basis of religious views. Therefore, in modern politics, instead of taking part against British imperialism, they engaged in such religious movements as *Khuddam-i-Ka'aba*, Pan-Islamism, *Hijrat* Movement, Khilafat Movement, and a movement in favour, as well as against, Ibn Saud. When one movement lost its credibility, another took its place. These religious movements were great obstacles in the

creation of any political consciousness among the Indian Muslims. The writings of Shibli, Muhammad Ali Jauhar and Maulana Azad isolated the Indian Muslims from Indian problems and involved their sympathies in the Muslim world affairs. This made them backward in Indian politics.

The result of this attitude was that the Muslims did not join hands with the Hindus to fight unitedly against the British. The fear of the Hindu majority was created in them to an extent that they became strongly anti-democratic. This anti-democratic attitude later on led them towards separation.

Tragedy of the Indian Muslims

The tragedy of the Indian Muslims in the Indian subcontinent was that the foreign-origin Muslims, who came as a conquerors, and politically dominated the country. asserted their racial and intellectual superiority over the local Indian Muslims and by enslaving them culturally suppressed all their creativeness and innovation.

Religiously, the Indian Muslims were never regarded as pure and were criticised on the adoption of a number of Hindu practices which were seen as antagonistic to Islam. Whenever there was any crisis, the *ulema* attributed it to their irreligious attitude. Especially, as Muslim society declined politically, the *ulema* blamed the Muslims of their apathy towards religion.

Culturally, the Indian Muslims regarded themselves inferior to Iranians and Central Asian Muslims, and because of this complex, they failed to produce an independent and nationalist culture. Not a single Indian religious scholar, poet or literary man was recognised as an authority in Iran and the Arab world. Because of his cultural imperialism, the Muslim rulers did not patronise the local cultures, which kept the masses backward.

Today, the past heritage of the Muslim dynastic rule is beyond the reach of the people. All our past literature is in Persian and our knowledge of Persian is lost in the passage of time. Persian remained a language of the elite throughout history and, with the end of their political domination, it lost its status and the whole literature which was produced in it became useless.

Those Muslims who arrived in India from different Muslim countries, and settled in India, retained a romantic longing for their ancestral land. Though they resided in India, believed that one day they had to go back to their homeland. They further believed that India was a land of infidels and unbelievers and there was always a danger of pollution of their religious beliefs. The *ulema* continuously warned them against adopting the irreligious rituals and against making the religious impure. As long as they enjoyed political domination, the threat to religion was ignored, but after the decline of political power, they felt themselves and found their religion in danger. Because of their religion, the Muslims failed to deepen their roots in the Indian soil and preferred to migrate rather than integrate with the Indians.

Although the Indian Muslims, because of this attitude, faced a number of crises, it appears that, in spite of all vicissitudes, they have not learned the lesson of history. And this is a great tragedy of the Indian Muslim community.

PART 2

1

COMMUNALISM IN THE WRITING OF HISTORY

There was no tradition of writing of history in the ancient India. This tradition was started after the arrival and the establishment of the rule of the Muslim dynasties in India. But the writing of history, from its very beginning, lacked the objectivity and contained two weaknesses which marred its impact. First, the historians were the employees of the king and hence they were duty bound to glorify the character and the rule of their benefactor. Second, most of them were the Muslims and their attitude towards the Hindus was hostile and inimical. The result of this attitude was that in their account they exaggerated all those events in which the Hindus were defeated, humiliated, and insulted. They reported the massacre of the Hindus, demolition of the temples, and breaking of their idols with glee and pride. Probably, by writing these events they wished to boost up the moral of the Muslims not to feel threatened by the Hindus.

However, in the history writings of the Sultanate as well the Mughals the prejudice against the Hindus, the communalist feeling, and anti-Hindus sentiments are fully reflected the attitude of the Muslims ruling classes who ruled over India. On the other hand, the historiography of this period eulogised the Sultans of Delhi and the Mughal Emperors as the

defenders of the faith and protectors of the Muslims. All the wars which they fought against the Hindus, albeit for purely temporal reasons and expansions of their territories and seizing more wealth, were declared holy and they were referred to as Ghazi (Holy Warrior). Those rulers who demolished the Hindus temples and dismantled their idols were titled as *But Shikan* (Idol breaker). To understand the psyche of this period, I shall like to quote some of the passages from the contemporary history books.

Minhaj Siraj (d-1260?) in his book *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri* writes about the conquest of Somnath by Mahmud of Ghazna:

> "He brought the idol from the Somnath and broke it in 4 Pieces. One of the piece he put as a step of the Friday Mosque at Ghazna, the other is kept in the royal palace and the rest of the two pieces were sent to Mecca and Madina."

Qasim Farishta (d-1612?) in his book *Tarikh-i-Farishta* reported the reply of Mahmud of Ghazna which he sent to the *Raja* of Thanesar:

> "We, the Muslims believe that in case of preaching of Islam and destroying the worshiping places of the infields we would be rewarded profusely in the next world."

Whatever said, Mahmud of Ghazna practically acted to win the best place in the paradise. His invasions to India brought miseries and wide destruction to the people of Hindustan. After breaking the famous idol of Somnaths, he is still popularly remembered as the *But Shikan*. Mahmud of Ghazna has become a popular hero in a communal atmosphere when the Muslims and the Hindus were fighting with each other to strengthen the British government. (Some of us still need a Mahmud of Ghazna to humiliate the Hindus of India).

In breaking the idols, Mahmud of Ghazna was not the

only ruler, he was followed by other Muslim rulers who faithfully emulated the policy of their predecessor and earned the title of Ghazi and *But Shikan*. For example, when Sultan Iltutmish (1211-1236) conquered Bhilsa, a contemporary historian reports:

> "He destroyed a temple which was constructed in the period of three years. Then he went to *Ujjain Nagar* and demolished the temple of *Mahakal*."

Ziauddin Barani (d-?) writing on the period of Alauddin Khilji (1296-1316) reports the conquest of South India by Malik Kafur:

> "He dismantled the golden Temple of Mabad and the golden idols, which adorned the temple for centuries, were broken. All golden and precious posts were taken away and deposited in the state treasury."

Ziauddin Barani enumerates the good qualities of a Muslim ruler. According to him an ideal Muslim King, in keeping the glory of Islam, should eliminate all the traces of infidelity and idol worshiping. If he could not destroy all retuals and customs of the infidels, then at least he should take such steps which force the unbelievers to live in humiliation. He should not allow them to live a respectable and honourable life.

The Mughal historiography carries the same sentiments. In spite of the tolerant policy of Akbar, the ruling Muslim classes were anti-Hindus and prejudiced against their religion. In the famous battle of Haldighat (1576) in which the *Rajputs*, in defence of the Mughals, fought against their co-religionists, the noted Mughal historian Abdul Qadir Badauni (d.1595?) remarked "The unbelievers are killing each other no both sides."

When Jehangir (1605-1627) conquered the famous fort of Kangra, he proudly writes in his memoirs:

"After the occupation of the fort, the *Azan* was said, the *Khutba* was recited and the cow was slaughtered, since the construction of the fort, these Islamic rites were not implemented here. I, after the fulfilment of these rituals, thanked God."

The attributes which are used for the Hindus in the historiography reflect the attitude of the Muslim ruling classes towards the Hindus. They are referred to as infidels, unbeliever, unholy, impure, misled, detested, accursed, and abominable. On the contrary, the Muslims are called as brave, bold, believer, pure, august, and blest. Every victory of the Muslims was the result of their true beliefs and faith in God. In fighting against the Hindus, in case of death, they became martyrs, and in case of survival, they earned the title of the *Ghazi*.

In the Muslim historiography, there is no place for the Hindu point of view. Their art, architecture, literature, and sculpture is referred to contemptutously. No attempt was made to understand their rituals, customs, and religion. The result is that this historiography conveys only limited information which does not help us to comprehend the period and its spirit.

After the partition (1947) it was expected that the feelings of religious prejudices and communalist approach would come to end and both the Hindus and the Muslims would try to understand their history objectively, but instead of it, the communalist feeling are further deepened in both countries which are fully reflected in their text books.

As far as Pakistan is concerned, the history text books of the school, colleges, and the universities follow the same trends which are contained in the contemporary history books of the Sultanate and the Mughals i.e. hostility towards the Hindus and the flattery of the ruling classes.

There are a number of weaknesses in our text books.

First of all these are written under the political influence and justify the decisions of the politician. The result is that the interpretation of these text books altered with the change of government. Further, these text books provide the legitimacy to every government to rule over the country. The attempts are also made to establish the relation of the ruling classes to the history of the Freedom Movement in order to legitimize there rule.

The whole history of the Freedom Movement is described in term of the individuals role. The contribution of the masses is completely ignored. Further, the role of these Muslims, who were in the Congress or in other parties, is erased from the history books. Only the Muslim Leagues and its leaders are placed highly in these books. Same is the case of the Hindu leaders, who resisted against the British rule, are not mentioned at all. These classified information make our students insular and ignorant.

Most of the writers of these text books are completely unaware of the new research and new findings. Since 1947, a number of biographies, diaries, private papers, letters, and documents are published which brought to light new facts and changed the whole perspective of the partition. Based on this new material, many foreign scholars investigated the whole period with different points of view, but in writing these text books, the authors ignored the new research findings and followed the oft-repeated and out dated interpretation which naturally suits our ruling classes.

Here, an attempts is made to analyse the text books of social studies which are taught in our schools. In the text book of 5 class, the author tells us about the difference of the Muslims and the Hindus.

> "There are a number of differences between the Hindus and the Muslims. The Hindus worship idols while the

Muslims believe in oneness of God. There is no difference of high and low, rich or poor among the Muslims. They believe in equality and brotherhood while the Hindus are divided into 4 castes and the higher caste Hindus are not allowed to mix with the lower caste people."

The writer of same book further enumerating the differences of the Past writes:

"The Hindus and the Muslims were two different nations, their way of living, clothes, language, and food were different. They had different histories and civilizations."

In the text book of 6 class the author says:

"The Muslims treated the Hindus humanely and always pursued the policy of tolerance. The Hindus on the contrary, never cooperated the Muslims. In fact they regarded South Asia as their own land and were not ready to accommodate the Muslims."

About the Hindu Architect the opinion of the writer is:

"The Hindu architect was old and out of date. There were no arches, domes, or minarets. The Muslims architect was at its zenith."

About the Hindu dress, the author writes:

"The Hindus used to wrap up the unstitched cloth around the body. The Muslims actually introduced the proper dress to India. Besides this, the Muslims brought many useful customs such as to shake hand at the time of meeting, to embrace each other, and the right of education to all."

So, the whole history of the Hindu-Muslim relations is narrated within a framework which failed to find any thing common between these two communities. Instead of examining the history with social, political, and economic point of view, it

is discussed with religious prejudices and thus, confined the scope of history.

On the event of 1857, a number of books are published which completely changed the outlook of the historians. Dr. Sen published his book "1857" which objectively analysed the role of the Hindus, Muslims, and the British. All these researchers are not incorporated in our text books and the event is reported with communalist point of view:

> In the history of South Asia it was the great tragedy which inflicted the Muslims. To counter the Muslims, the Hindus were supported and patronized by the British Government.
>
> The text book further reports:
>
> "The British were not threatened by the Hindus. It was believed by the British that the Hindus could easily become their slaves as they were the slaves of the Muslims. On these grounds, they supported the Hindus."
>
> About the all Indian Congress, The text book says:
>
> "In South Asia, the Hindus were organized as a result of the British government's support. The founded a party in 1885 which was named the Congress. This party was patronized by the government. Its founder was also an English man. The educated Hindus joined this party. As the Hindus were in majority they were in confidence that everything would be decided in their favour."

In absence of any other point of view, these text books are making the young generation narrow minded and prejudiced and our educational institutions are producing such youngsters who are intoxicated by the fundamentalism, Fascism, and religious fanaticism. The result is that instead of arguments and persuasions, they seek violence to solve their disputes.

History, when it is used by the retrogressive forces, makes society backward, and accelerates the process of decline as happened in Pakistan, but when it is used by the progressive forces, it helps to create new hopes and aspires the people to march forward. The future of Pakistan lies in the liberation of history from the reactionary forces and its use by enlightened intellectuals to create historical consciousness and national identity based on tolerance and humanism.

2

BORN TO LEND

The class of the *Sahukars*, money lenders and bankers, was in existence during the heydays of the Mughals, but their number and significance increased when the Mughal power declined and its state institutions lost control to rule over the empire. As a result, the Mughal emperors and nobility, whose main source of income was land revenue, were deprived of their income from their *jagirs*. Due to political upheavals, their income decreased while their expenses remained the same. They generously spent the money on maintaining their households, their retinue, and outward glory. When it became difficult for the nobility to get the revenue regularly from their *jagirs*, they started to auction them and gave on contract to the highest bidders. This situation provided a good opportunity to the *Sahukars* to get the *jagirs* on contract and get more money by squeezing the peasants. By this arrangement, the nobles earned easy money whereas the *Sahukars* accumulated wealth by exploiting the peasantry.

The position of the *Sahukars* further became important when due to the financial irregularities in the government departments the state employees stopped getting their salaries regularly. To meet their expenses they were, therefore, forced to borrow money from the *Sahukars* on exorbitant interest.

The position of the Mughal nobility further deteriorated

when the *Marhatas*, *Sikhs*, *Jats* and the East India Company occupied the different parts of the Empire depriving them of their landed property. This heavy financial blow compelled them to rely on *Sahukars* who readily gave money on the interest. Soon the nobility lost their jewels, ornaments, ***havelis***, costly clothes, and other valuables in the payment of interest.

The later Mughal rulers also borrowed money from the *Sahukars*, because the East India Company started to reduce their allowance after the succession of each ruler. As the Emperor had to maintain the whole palace, the large family, and a large retinue, he had to meet both ends by taking out loans from the *Sahukars*.

The *Sahukars* class further strengthened when the small states emerged as independent or semi-independent. Having limited sources of income, they took money from the *Sahukars* whenever there was civil war, payment of tributes, or keeping the armies for defence purpose or to quell the rebellions.

The result was that soon the nobility and the rulers became dependent on the *Sahukars*. In Bengal, for example, Seth Jagat and Omichand became so powerful that they not only lent money to the *Nawab* of Bengal but struck their own coins.

The wealth and influence converted the *Sahukars* into the commercial class of India. When the question of the expansion of commercial activities arose, they aligned themselves with the East India Company which not only purchased Indian goods through them but took their merchandise out of India to the Far East and Europe. Thus it was the common interest of the *Sahukars* and the East Indian Company that Sirajudola was overthrown in the battle of Plassy (1757).

It was lack of political understanding and maturity of the *Sahukar* class that, instead of taking advantage of the political weakness of the Indian ruling classes and asserting to

change the socio-political structure, their expectations were soon dashed to the ground when the EIC assumed full power and immediately weakened the *Sahukar* class and used the political power to expand its own commercial activities.

One of the interesting aspects of this phenomenon was than on the question of interest there was no religious controversy and no condemnation by the *ulema*. It became an accepted practice and nobody was apologetic when they paid interest on the loan. The socio-economic compulsion made it legitimate. In the later period, the famous Urdu writer, Nazir Ahmad justified the payment of interest on religious ground and acted as *Sahukar* when he lent his money on interest.

The Society and A Touch above the rest

A society, which divides itself on the basis of caste and class, discriminates its members according to their social, economic, and political status. This inequality breeds crimes and injustice in the society. Consequently those who wield power are exempted from all rules and regulations and are put above law; whereas those who are poor suffer under the heavy burden of law and subjected all niceties of rules.

The caste-ridden society of ancient India tolerated the crimes committed by the *Brahmans* and the *Kshatriyas,* but the offences of the lower castes were severely punished in the name of peace and justice.

The Muslim society in the Indian sub-continent was very much conscious of social status based on wealth, power and lineage. It was broadly divided between *Ashrafs* and *Ajlafs* i.e., privileged and unprivileged. On the top of the hierarchy was the King, who was above from all laws and responsible only to God. Hence, there was no authority which could challenge his judgement.

During the period of the Muslim dynastic rule there were two concepts of crimes; against the ruler or state and against the society. The King was not very much concerned about the crimes such as theft, bribery, arson, poisoning, gambling, prostitution, and murder. According to Sri Ram Sharma: "All other crimes were offences against individuals in which the society as represented by the state was not much interested. Murder was an affair between the relatives of the murdered man and the murderer.' (Sharma:Mughal Government and Administration; Bombay: p.221).

All political offences such as rebellion, treason, and any opposition to the ruler were regarded serious threat to the state. These crimes were severely dealt with and speedy justice was administered, especially, rebellion, remained mostly, unpardonable crime and the rebels were immediately executed without any formal trial. There are a number of examples when the Muslim rulers punished their political opponents inhumanly. When Sultan Balban (1266-1287) quelled the rebellion of *Tughral* in Bengal, he hanged all his followers and walked between the two rows of the hanged persons alongwith his son and told him to get lesson from this scene and never think to rebel against the King of Delhi. Alauddin Khilji (1296-1316), after crushing the rebellion of the new Muslim Mongols, executed them immediately and distributed their women and children among the sweepers. Such examples can be multiplied in every period of the Muslim rule in India. I.H. Qureshi, who glorifies the Muslim Justice, admits: "Ordinary crimes were, however left within the jurisdiction of the *Diwan-ul-qada;* only political crimes were looked upon as crimes against the state. As political considerations were dominant in the adjudication of such cases, it can be called *siyasat.*" (Administration of the Mughal; Karachi 1966, p.181).

As the ruler enjoyed absolute powers, he gave his

verdict immediately, sometimes, without hearing the aggrieved party. Most of the time their judgements were based on their personal whims. For example, such an enlightened ruler was Akbar, once seeing a servant sleeping at the time of his duty to watch the candles burning, was so enraged that the poor man was executed immediately. Jahangir once ordered to kill two peasants who accidently disturbed his hunt. In such punishment no legal procedure was followed and in spite of the presence of the *Qazi, Mufti*, and *Sadr*, the judgement of the King was neither challenged nor condemned.

After the ruler, the nobility consisting of the higher ranking government officials, military generals and commanders and the members of the royal family enjoyed unbound privileges and, thus, they were beyond by the laws. Most of their crimes such as bribery, corruption, harassment of peasants, artisans, and traders were ignored. As most of the common people had no access to the higher authority to complain against their crimes, they remained unpunished. Except in one or two cases when, somehow, complaint against them reached to the ruler and the accused noble was either reprimanded or slightly punished. Such cases were exceptional and not general. Otherwise people endured all hardships silently praying the Divine Power to intervene and punish the culprits. There are a number of examples in the Mughal history when the nobles, in spite of their crimes, escaped from punishment and no justice administered to them.

Mirza Rustam Safavi, the governor of Thatta, oppressed the people up to such extent that Jahangir came to know about this crimes; but he was simply dismissed from his post, and, after a lapse of time, he was again appointed as a governor of Bihar. Not only the high officials, but their family members committed all types of crimes knowing that they would not be punished. During the rule of Jahangir, the son of

the governor of Lahore, known as Mirza Lahori, was in habit to flog his servants just to get sadistic pleasure. He, even sometimes, burried them alive asking them to report their conversation with *Munkar Nakir* (two angles who come in the grave to investigate the faith of a dead person). He used to kidnap the Hindu brides at the time of their marriage and handed them over after deflowering them. One of the favourite nobles of Jahangir, Muqarrab Khan, the governor of Khambayat, kidnapped a girl and kept her in the harem. Her mother, who was a widow, somehow, succeeded to complain to Jahangir, but in spite of royal effort, the noble refused to hand over the girl. He paid some amount to the mother and forced her to keep silence.

Moreover, it was risky to complain because it meant to invite the wrath of the powerful nobles. There are again a number of examples when the aggrieved party made complaint and suffered as a result of their actions. During the rule of Shahjahan, some people complained about crimes of the governor of Orissa, known as Baqar Khan. On hearing about the complaint against him, the governor killed seven hundred peoples who were involved in complaining against him. Only one person escaped from the massacre and reached to the court, but he was also killed by the son-in-law of Baqar Khan and all evidence of the crime were completely destroyed. The King, in spite of the knowledge of the crime, kept his silence. One of the nobles of Aurangzeb, Nayabat Khan, killed Abul Fazl Mamori, and the only punishment which was rendered to the murderer was to deprive him from his post and title which was soon restored to him. (Mubarak Ali: Mughal Darbar, Lahore 1986, p.189).

Thus, the history records the crimes of the Muslim nobility which include kidnapping and raping of women; extorting money from the people; torturing and killing, and

keeping people in prison. The whole myth of the Mughal justice is the invention, in the first phase, by the nationalist historians who glorified the Mughal rule in order to discredit the British administration. This approach is later on adopted by the Muslim Communalist historians to prove that the rule of the Muslim dynasties was enlightened. I.H. Qureshi paid glowing tribute to Jahangir when he writes; "This Emperor took pride in the fact that the first order of his reign was to construct a "chain of justice" which anyone seeking the protection of the monarch against the injustices of anyone of his officials could pull to raise an alarm in the palace" (p.198). There is no evidence in the contemporary sources that the chain was ever used by the oppressed parties. It remained a decorative piece signifying the mockery of justice.

Only in case of the crimes against the state such as rebellion, embezzlement, and default of land revenue, no discrimination was made between the nobles and common people and the culprits were punished severely. In rest of the crimes, the privileged class either remained unpunished or got minimum punishment. As far as common people were concerned, a legal procedure was adopted to punish them.

The situation changed after the establishment of the British rule when the new rulers set up Anglo-Saxon system of judicial administration. To the Britishers, there was no difference between the nobles and the common people as far as the law was concerned. The Indian nobility was shocked when the members of high families were called by the court and found then standing side by side by the common people. In UP, the *Jagirdars*, especially made a representation to the government not to treat them at judicial court equal to their tenants. This mentality of the nobility was reflected in the case of famous Urdu poet Ghalib. When he was arrested on the charge of gambling, everybody was shocked, because nobody

expected to put such a prominent person in prison on a minor crime. The British, in spite of all their drawbacks, at least treated all members of the society equally and their courts punished all criminals after a legal procedure and proper trials. Even the powerful and wealthy Indians were afraid to commit crimes.

After the Independence, the Judiciary, for a short period, retained the British traditions and fairly maintained the administration of justice, but soon the whole traditions started to decline and our society reverted back to the medieval periods. Now the situation is that the privileged classes are above the law, while the common people endure legal hardships. Thus, to the privileged classes, the society discovered and found our golden past, but to the common people, there remains no power except Divine authority to which they wait to intervene and provide them justice.

3

TRAVELLING BACK IN TIME

The war of Independence (1857) has always been a controversial event from the very beginning. The fear of inviting trouble from the British government was such that no Indian dared to refer to it other than as 'Mutiny' or *'Ghadr'*. What happened in 1857 surprised the British government so much that official circles disputed as to whether it was a sepoy mutiny or a civil rebellion against the *Raj*.

The official view, after the outbreak of the sepoy rebellion, was that the Bengal Native army was responsible for the mutiny and the civil disturbances that followed it were the result of the breakdown of law and order. Disraeli, the British Prime Minister however, called it a national revolt. The British civil and military administration in India kept shifting the blame on to the another. William Muir, a distinguished civil administrator, accused the army and referred to the event as a "military mutiny". a struggle between the government and the soldiers and not between the government and the people.

The European Mercantile community, on the other hand, blamed Canning, the Governor General, for his soft policy towards the natives. This process of mutual accusation continued for some time until the rebellion was completely quelled. Historians, both British and Indian, analysed the event with different perspectives. British historians analysed the event

from the purely administrative point of view and tried to understand the phenomenon so as to check such occurrences in future.

J.W. Kay's book History of the Sepoy War (London 1867) was the first study which undertook to find out the real cause of the outbreak. Kay's points out the British policy of depriving the aristocracy, religious circles, and the peasant proprietary class from their privileges was the cause of the unrest. G.B. Malleson in his book The Indian Mutiny of 1857 (London 1891) emotionally deals with the event and condemns canning for his mild policy. He eulogizes those British generals and soldiers who fought and restored British power. Malleson and other historians, who have thus analysed it, seem to have been led by a conspiracy theory. The mutiny, according to them, was the product of a conspiracy of Nana Sahib Maulan of Faizabad and the *Rani* of Jhansi who mutually hatched the conspiracy with the sepoys.

T. Rice Holmes in his History of the Indian mutiny (1883) express the view that the resulting civil rebellions were the product of the mutiny. Once the sepoys revolted, the law and order situation deteriorated. The *taluqdars,* and the dispossessed landholders took advantage and started to loot and plunder government property.

On the other hand, Indians who wrote on the event, have confined their accounts to tragedies of the mutiny without referring to the British crimes. Zahir Ahmad Dehlawi in his *Dastan-e-Ghadr* beautifully depicts the social life of Delhi before 1857 and the collapse of the society after the event but avoids writing anything that may offend the British government.

Contemporary British writers on the contrary, highlight the sufferings of the British and how they were treated by the Indians. The Kanpur massacre, the killing of the women and

children at Delhi and other places are condemned as crimes against humanity, but what was done by the British army to the Indian people is justified and not a word of sorrow is expressed on the massacring, plundering, torturing, and humiliation of the Indians.

Another interpretation of 1857 presented by the British administrative historians is that the masses were happy under British rule and it was the Muslim elite which mobilised the masses to fight against the British. Alfred Loyal and William Muir are the exponents of this interpretation. Loyall Writes wrote: "the whole insurrection is a great Mohammedan conspiracy (1857) and the sepoys were merely tools in the hands of the Mussulman."

J.C. Browne in his book The Punjab and Delhi in 1857 (1861) gives further strength to this interpretation and tries to prove that the Muslims were the instigators and the Hindus their dupes.

During the Freedom Movement when Indian nationalism was at its height, V.D. Savurkar wrote his monumental book Indian War of Independence of 1857 (London 1909). He was the first man who called it the "War of Independence" and paid glowing tribute to all Indians who fought against the British. Nationalism makes no distinction of race and religion with him and the Hindus and Muslims both appear as a united force against the foreign rule.

After Independence (1947), the events of 1857 have been interpreted from different points of view. Historians have dispassionately judged it. The most objective study was done by. S.N. Sen in his book simply titled 1857. It was published by the Indian Government in 1957 to commemorate the centenary of event. Sen's interpretation is that there was no prior conspiracy and what happened in 1857 was a national uprising. This interpretation was challenged by R.C. Majumdar

in his book The Sepoy Mutiny and the Revolt of 1857 (1957). He has tried to prove that in 1857 there was no national revolt, it was merely a sepoy mutiny. The civil rebellion in 1857 were the by product of the mutiny. S.B. Chaudhuri, opposing this view proves in his book Civil Rebellions in the Indian Mutinies (1957) that it was a national revolt against the British.

In Pakistan, I.H. Qureshi and Moinul Haq, following the point of view of Alfred Loyal and W. Muir that the Muslims were mainly involved in the uprising, give the entire credit to the Muslims ignoring the role of the Hindus. This point of view is further narrowed down by religious scholars such as Maulana Muhammad Mian, who in his book The Glorious Past of the Indian *ulema*, high-lights the role of the *ulema*, giving them the entire credit for the mutiny entirely. It is the Maulan's interpretation alone that has found its way into our text books as the only authentic interpretation.

4

MUSLIMS IN SUBCONTINENT: ROOTS OF DICTATORSHIP

The tradition of dictatorship is linked deeply with the Indian Muslim society, its mental frame and ideological structure that led it to form ideas about the state, its ruler and the political system. In this article, therefore, these factors shall be critically examined. It is only after analysing these factors that all those conditions that took their toll after the partition of the country could better be understood and evaluated.

It is an undeniable fact that the conditions with which we are confronted after independence and the creation of Pakistan and, against which we show our resentment, are deeply interwoven in the historical context and our approach to the past.

The Muslim invaders began their campaign in the period of Mahmud of Ghazna (998-1030) and, after Mohammad Ghori's (1203-1206) conquests, they established their permanent rule in India. But these kingdoms remained encircled by the Hindu states and were, therefore, constantly in danger of being uprooted. The survival of the early Turkish government and its security lay only in the person of a capable ruler on the throne of Delhi. It was also a must for him that he maintain a well disciplined army, alert and equipped with modern weapons and rich with war experience so that the ruler may continue the

policy of aggression an a best defence against the neighbouring states.

The ruler's vigilance along with the support of the army was the only guarantee of his survival. It was thus, also an important problem for these rulers as to where from they should recruit the new soldiers and how they should be brought in the service of the army. These soldiers were available in those Muslim settlements which arose after the Muslim conquest.

Mentally they were only prepared for wars and the army service when they were made to believe that their very survival and security were in grave danger. They could be allured to take part in wars only when an extreme hatred against the Hindus and their religion was fanned in them.

The Hindu majority and the fear of Hindus' attacks haunted their minds and such a state of mind created and nursed a mentality that the security of the Muslims could only be achieved with a strong ruler, centre and a powerful army. They were convinced that this was the only means of their survival against the Hindu majority. It thus, created in the entire Muslim society a great respect for those rulers who continued to wage wars and conquer territories under Hindu rule. The rulers, who showed their inability and weakness in persuing this policy, were subjected to severe criticism. The main responsibility of the downfall of the government was pinned upon them.

The Muslim ruling classes of India understood it fully well that the basis of their rule and power was the Muslim community, therefore it was absolutely essential to exploit religious sentiments. It is because of this fact that all the Muslim rulers of India proclaimed themselves to be the defenders of faith and community despite the fact that they were forced to keep the foundation of their rule on secularism. However, to exploit religion and to impress the masses, they patronised *ulema, sufis* and other religious personalities so that

the people may support their regime as Islamic.

Moreover, they infused the fear in the Muslims of India if their rule turned weak or were abolished, it would not be possible for them to survive. This may be proved from an event from the Khilji period. When an Indian slave, Khusro Malik killed the last Khilji ruler Qutubuddin (1316-1320) and occupied the throne of Delhi, and intensive propaganda against him was launched that he was a Hindu and therefore, the lives and the properties of the Muslim nobility which united them under the leadership of Ghiasuddin Tughluq (1320-1325), and they recaptured the throne of Delhi after defeating Khusro Malik. As it appears from the contemporary history records, the Muslims of India were then satisfied that their lives and properties had been saved.

Another example is Akbar's policy of religious toleration due to which the dogmatic Muslim nobility was not only frustrated and afraid but started crying that Islam was in danger. They launched a vigorous campaign against it. The Muslim nobles desired that the administration should remain their sole property and others should not be associated with it. To keep their grip from on the monopolistic position, they fully exploited the religious sentiments of the Muslim community as well. If according to them, the state was then Islamic, naturally the administration of it became the responsibility of the Muslims alone. Therefore it was in their own interests, that the state should always remain Islamic. It was also well within their interests that the Hindu community and the Muslim community should not get closer culturally and socially. Because of such use of religion, the class contradictions among them could not be overrun and, even the lower class Muslims took pride in these rulers as their co-religionists and, the rhetoric of Mahmud and Ayaz standing in the same row kept them in a fool's paradise with the absurd claim of Islamic equality and

brotherhood.

(a) Tricks and trades of the Muslim bourgeoisie

Shah Waliullah invited the Afghan ruler, Ahmad Shah Abdali (1743-1773) to attack India so that the strong personality and the powerful army could protect the Indian Muslims. Later, Syed Ahmad Shaheed (d.1731). also waged his *jihad.* This reflected the protected only by the personality of the Amir ul Muminin and with the Islamic spirit of *jihad.* About the disturbances of 1857, it can be said that is was the last effort of the Muslim ruling classes to establish and rehabilitate their power and position, once again by force. The failure of this revolt killed their urge for future resistance.

Thus, when the British supremacy in India was firmly established the Muslim ruling classes had lost all their strength and energies. It was, therefore, that Sir Syed Ahmad Khan saw the salvations of these classes as a compromise with the British, merely in order to save their own class interest. The Muslim elites and Sir Syed Ahmad Khan wished that the British rule in India should become eternal. Now they thought that they could protect themselves from the dangers of Hindu dominance only under the patronage of the British. It has constantly been declared by the successors of Sir Syed as well. For example, in October 1901, in the meeting of Mohammadan Political Organisation a few resolutions were adopted. One of them said:

> "The welfare of the Muslims in India is attached with the permanent British rule and its solidifications... The Congress demands a representative government and the competitive examinations for the higher services. It is against the interests of the Muslims and, therefore, efforts should be made to discourage and stop the Muslims from joining the Congress."

Again, in December 1906, Viqarul Mulk, while addressing a meeting said: "Our population, in comparison to other nations, is of minority. Now if at any time, God forbid, the British rule is not there than we will have to live in subordination to the Hindu community and, our lives, our properties, honour and our religion would be exposed to grave dangers."

When the Muslim elite and the privileged classes put their safety and their protection at the mercy of the British rule and identified their interests with them, then the Muslims opposed each and every movement aiming to weaken the British hold. It is because of this that Sir Syed severely criticised the creation of the Congress and its political activities. When the question of Indian representation in the government was raised by the Congress, Sir Syed, representing the Muslim elite, argued against this demand. He asserted that in the case of elections, the number of Hindu voters would be enormous in relation to the Muslims and the Hindu candidates would naturally win more support. Opposing the representative system because the Muslims were not equal to the Hindus, in property, wealth and education, they would not have equal representation. In this form of elections the Hindus would always be dominant and the Muslims would not be able to compete with them. The logical conclusion resulting from his arguments, was that the British should rule India without sharing power with anyone and that the Muslims as a community should remain completely loyal to them.

It was in the British interests as well that the Hindus and the Muslims should not get together. The Muslims should remain away from the campaign launched by the Hindus. They, therefore, exploited the anti-democratic feelings of the Muslims and the Principal of the Aligarh College, Mr. Theodore Morrison, addressing his students once said, 'Democratic

government would take them to the position of wood-cutters and water-carriers and the names of the Muslims would be erased from this country.'

In such a background, the educated Muslims, belonging mostly to the Muslim elite classes, developed an opposition and a sense of dislike for democracy and they judged the democratic institutions from their well established minority point of view and made their own conclusions that in such a system the minority would neither have position nor importance and would be helpless at the hands of the majority. In the creation and perpetuation of such a mentality, the historical consciousness also played its role. The Muslims could not get over the fact that they had ruled the Hindus through physical strength and by instilling them with the fear that the Muslims were a superior race. It was therefore unconceivable for them then that this rule and authority be transferred to the Hindus, the very people over whom they had governed.

Therefore, the democratic government for them was the government of the Hindus. In 1920, Maulana Muhammad Ali also opposed it on similar grounds that since the Muslims were in a minority and were backward educationally as compared to the Hindus, so it was not in their interests that the democratic system should be established.

These and other such thoughts about democracy were running through the minds of the Muslim elite, who only belonged to the Muslim nobility and who never had any relationship and connection with the Muslim masses. They did not even send their children to the government established schools because their children, in that case, would have had to sit with common children. They were extremely sensitive about their status, position, and prestige. Since democracy represents all the people it is in principle opposed to an elitist class. They therefore pressurised the British to consider their influence and

prestige. In the name of the 'Representation of the U.P. Muslims' they made an appeal and told the government that they were the *Jagirdars* of the country and could still command influence in the provinces, and as such, were more important than the numerical majority. The family lineage should be given the priority they said. Their main objectives were that they should maintain their privileges with the blessings of the British Government. For their own set objectives, they created among the common Muslims a sense of helplessness and of utter backwardness. They kept on directing all their efforts to this end in the fear that democracy would take away the benefits they had so enjoyed. Iqbal also expressed the same, sentiments in his Allahabad Address when he repeated that Western democracy could not function in this country. In his poetry as well his anti-democratic thought is apparent. It as a whole, reflects the mind of the Muslim elites who never wanted to loose their social status and position by mixing with the common people. They desired that their superior position should remain intact and fully protected.

In such a background the Muslim bourgeoisie, had only one course open for them. It was complete solidarity and compromise with the British and opposition to all anti-British movements. It was by such a policy that they gained their position, their privileges and their protection under the British *Raj*. As a result of such a co-operation the separate electorates and the quota system in the services were introduced so that the elitist class could protect their social and status instead of entering into competitive examinations. They never thought of the Muslim people belonging to the peasantry, labour force and the other working classes and they never considered to improve their social status and conditions.

These conditions helped in creating a particular mentality of the Muslim community and the fundamental basis

of which was the fear of the Hindu dominance, strong ruling personality and the military power, the provocative slogan of the danger to religion. This peculiar mentality of the ruling classes remained intact even after the creation of Pakistan, and, in one way or the other, it mainly contributed in the political process of the country.

(b) Sold for a pittance

Leading the Pakistan movement to success was the brilliant achievement of the Muslim League but the leadership of it belonged to the upper Muslim classes and they had no roots with the masses. The battle of Pakistan was a constitutional battle in which the problem was solved through discussions, arguments and negotiations. Fifanz Fenon had rightly remarked that in the third world any political movement, settled through constitutional and compromising discussions little reflects the representation of the masses. Battles for independence which are fought with the people's participation result in an enormous increase in their participation in state affairs after independence. Pakistan, since its birth has always been opposed to this process, therefore, on the whole the governmental machinery and the monopoly of the ruling classes remained intact. They, keeping the people away from the political process, made their grip on these power bases stronger. These bases, of course, have been the bureaucracy, the armed forces and the judiciary.

From the creation of Pakistan the ruling classes, worked against the democratic process and created a permanent fear constant danger. In view of the Hindu enmity a permanent fear of India was Inflicted on their minds. In such a perspective, again the historical view of the past were revived and promoted. The idea was again vigorously mooted in them that a

strong and an all powerful personality and a very strong army equipped with the most modern weapons were the only guarantee of the survival of this country. I remember well that when the war of 1965 started, it was said that the defeat of Miss Jinnah in the presidential elections against Ayub Khan proved a blessing in disguise. Had she been the head of the government, she would never have been successful in defending this country. Thus in the person of Ayub Khan, they got a defender and protector of Pakistan. What is really sad is, that no-one argued that if Miss Jinnah had been in power the war might not have taken place at all. In view of the danger to the country, the people were led to believe that the only safe and viable option was in dictatorship. It is for this reason that with the take over of every military regime people attached their hopes to it.

Since the basis of the Pakistan movement was in religion so, after its creation the *ulema* asserted that Pakistan should be made an Islamic State. In 1949, Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani forcefully demanded that all the important posts should be given to those who believed in Islamic ideology. Those who were non-Muslims or Muslims only by culture, should not be allowed to take part in the formation of state policies. On the recommendations of these *ulema*, the Constituent Assembly adopted the Objective Resolutions in 1949 which clearly declares that God is the depository of all sovereign authority and that no law could be framed against the Quran and the Sunnah in the country.

Both of the above mentioned clauses are against the very spirit of democracy. In democracy, sovereignty lies with the people and their representatives have the duty to frame laws or undo them. Thus when efforts were made to Islamise democracy, the concept of *Ijma* and *Ijtihad* were compared with the Assemblies. The head of the Islamic state used to be for life but now the tenure has been reduced to the period of five years

and restrictions were imposed on women - so that they could not be head of the government and could not even contest elections. These complications resulted in the further delay in the adoption of the constitution and elections could not be head of the government and could not even contest elections. These complications resulted in the further delay in the adoption of the constitutions and elections could not be held. When in 1954, the Governor General dissolved the Constituent Assembly with the help of the bureaucracy and the judiciary declared the decision valid, the democratic process was not only damaged but its entire function was checked. It also stopped the chances of making Pakistan a nation.

In the absence of the democratic process, efforts were made to infuse a sense of loyalty to the cause of national integration. It was wrongly expected that people would forego all other attachments and loyalties for this end. When they reacted and refused to part with their past heritage they were blamed as regionalists and prejudicial. This process minimised the national concept and damaged the very foundation of the state.

Individual feelings were made to subordinate themselves to the will of an omnipotent state. In their efforts, however, the ruling classes forgot the very structure and the characteristics of the whole society. People, associations and their affiliations with their families tribe, caste, villages, city and the province were all brushed aside and were given no value and no consideration. But unless these factors are recognised and given a proper place in the political setup, there is no scope and no chance of achieving the concept of national integration. It was all denied, with the result, the feelings of provincialism took on extreme shape and the loyalties of the people to their nationalities became more and more strong.

Therefore, on this stage as well, the coming into the

fore of our historical and instinctive mentality had greatly damaged our future. In the undivided India, the Muslims feared the Hindu majority and now this fear has crept into provincialism. Punjab feared the Bengali majority and a temporary solution was made in the shape of One Unit and the principles of Parity which also greatly checked the democratic process. Now when Bangladesh has gained independence, the other three provinces are expressing the same fear against Punjab. In the shape of democracy, they virtually see only the rule of the Punjab.

In the undivided India, the Muslim leaders opposed democracy on the plea that the Muslims were illiterate and backward and were unable to compete with the Hindus. The same argument was adopted after Pakistan with a different angle, that since the majority of the people of Pakistan are illiterate and are politically inexperienced, therefore, the democratic institutions do not suit them. Ayub Khan went to the extent that democracy suits only those countries where the climate is cold and in hot climatic conditions like ours it is not practicable.

Thus, declaring the majority as politically immature, frequent efforts were made to bring in a type of democracy in which the ruling classes could manage their stronghold. In their efforts for the purpose, we sometimes find Basic Democracies, Referendum and the *Majlis-e-Shoora.* They were not only labelled as democratic institutions but it was also claimed that they represented the people also.

When the ruling classes in Pakistan cut their links with their people and became deprived of their strength and support, they felt it necessary to enlist the patronage of some other power to maintain their stronghold, their position of privilege and prestige and to protect their interest. British had lost its status as a world power after the second world war, therefore,

they now sought American support. For their own ulterior motives. they fully protected the American interests and American aid helped in consolidating their position and the institution of the ruling classes. It has resulted in creating roots of American imperialism in Pakistan and with the passage of time they have became so powerful that every ruler of Pakistan who takes over the reign of government, comes actually with American instructions and blessings.

The problems faced by the political process and the challenges linked with it, have reached its limit and become complicated. Even the political parties of the country have failed because their leadership is still commanded by the feudals. These political parties are more interested in taking over the reign of government rather than solving the problem of the people and changing the structure of the country for the better. Their party organisation is also undemocratic. The leaders of these parties consider the organisation as their personal *jagir* and there has never been any tradition to take workers into their confidence or consult them in the decision-making process. Many of the political parties never maintained any research cell nor do they care for the intellectuals to advise them on matters of national and international importance. Therefore, politics means in our country are only maneuvering and conspiracy and because of this reason, the term 'politics' has generally meant fraud and cheating only. Naturally, such a negative approach to the problems of politics is a boon for the ruling classes and they cashed in on it and continue to do so. Such an approach makes the politicians responsible for creating chaos and paves the way for dictatorship.

5

EVOLUTION OF URDU: THE CLASS CHARACTER OF URDU

It is said that Urdu originated after the arrival of Muslims in India. It does not mean that it was non-existent before and that Muslims laid its foundations after their arrival. Languages are not 'founded' and 'constructed' in short spans of time. They have their segments in the society spread over a long time. And coming into contact with new people, the languages constantly change and their words acquire new and different meanings. Such contact immensely increases the vocabulary.

Thus, when the Muslims arrived in India, they brought together the Arabic, Persian and the Turkish languages. With their constant contact with the local people, they greatly influenced the local languages and vice versa. Their contact changed the shape and the structure of the Indian languages, but the base of these languages remained intact. That is why the Urdu languages is not a new one in India.

According to Hafiz Mahmud Shirani, it is a developed form of a dialect spoken around Delhi and Mevat. When the Muslim dynasties established their kingdoms in Northern India, they had Persian as their court language, whereas, the people of India were quite ignorant of Persian. It resulted in the creation of a wide gap between the people and the ruling classes. Persian was becoming stronger because of the continuous new arrivals from Iran and Central Asia and they made the ruling classes

stronger. They also injected new life into the language and worked for the unity and the identification of the Indo-Iranian culture.

Thus, the administrative work and the problems of the state were dealt with in Persian but while talking to the common man and while settling the business matters, the ruling classes were force to come down to the local languages. Thus, as a result of these social contacts, crossing over of words was made possible.

After the fall of the Turks, when the *Khiljis, Tughluqs*, *Sayyids* and the *Lodhis* came into power, the decline of Persian was also witnessed. It was, because, the ruling dynasties, the elites and their families were now adopting the Indian customs, manners and way of life. Especially when the *Lodhis* and later when the *Suris* came to power, the dominance of Persian received a setback, because the mother tongue of these Afghan rulers was not Persian and they did not have any special love for it. Besides, they desired to demonstrate their abhorrence for the elites of Iran and of Central Asia whose languages was Persian and who held the Iranian culture dear. It was, perhaps, the reason why they degraded the Afghans.

In reaction, the Afghans, leaving their own language and culture, embraced the Indian languages and the culture. They started promoting Hindi and because of that we find the Persian and Hindi names common among them. For example *Kala Pahar*, *Bhaikan Khan* etc. Particularly, when the *Suris* came to power after defeating the Mughals, they openly expressed their hatred with Persian. Instead, the Indian customs and culture became a part of their life. But the reconquering of Mughals and the end of Afghan rule stopped this process of cultural assimilation. Their conquest provided a new lease of life to Persian language and the alien culture. With the coming into power of the Mughals, history witnessed the constant flow

of Persian intellectuals, men of letters, poets, administrators etc., who permanently avoided to identify themselves with the cultural moorings of India, and their sense of superiority was primarily smelt of the fact that Mughal court patronised them and the image of Persian was re-established on a sound footing. The language barrier was once again created among the ruling classes and the common people of India. When Persian was made the official language during the reign of Akbar, it pushed aside the other local languages.

Yet, the new-comers were not all elites but also included the commoners. They included the sepoy, the armymen, people capable of manning the lower strata of the bureaucracy, artisans, workers and businessmen. Their dealings were confined directly with the common masses of India and they were primarily responsible for the inter-change and the direct influence on these languages in India. Since they did not belong to any privileged class, they did not bother to maintain their family lineage nor the snobbery that they should speak the undiluted Persian.

Gradually, Muslim lower classes adopted Indian customs and traditions and their language. Therefore, in the creation of Urdu it played a vital role. It is the direct result of the mutual understanding, their dealings, the cultivation of their friendliness and their effort to achieve the common objective. The elites, poets, and men of letters however, kept on emphasising the eloquence of the language and expelling Indian words from their vocabulary. In Deccan after the fall of Bahmini kingdom, the Deccani language became the court language of the Golkanda and of Bijapur. It included words from *Marathi, Telgu, Tamil* etc. After the Mughal conquest in Aurangabad and its surroundings, the Aurangabadi language took its roots which was near to Urdu whereas in the other areas of Deccan, the Deccani had remained the people's

language. Thus in the 9th *Hijra* or the 15th century, the language that gained popularity and progress had its roots in the Indian masses. Its most important characteristic has been that the words of Arabic and Persian which were adopted in it were not in their original from and shape. But it was written the way it was pronounced. Therefore, the language which received priority and development in Deccan had its origin in this land and the status of Urdu was that of a local language which was distinct because of its music and rhythm. The use of Arabic and Persian words in it was most limited and which were used and were written they way they were spoken.

This language, in the beginning was called Hindi, Hinduvi, Hindustani, Rekhta and lastly, Urdu. When Urdu was being developed as a language in Deccan, it was present as the people's language in Northern India but it was not adopted by the ruling classes and as such its status was only that of the people's language and it had the most limited use of Arabic and Persian words. The best example of it are the *Dohas* of Kabir which were all rendered in the people's language and, for that reason, still have attraction and sweetness. The decline of Persian in India began with the decay of the Mughal court and struggle elsewhere for their livelihood. When they faced the harsh realities of life in pursuit of their livelihood, they became somewhat realistic. But still the medium of expression was Persian. Due to the financial stringencies of the Mughal court the flow of the men of letters and poets from Iran also slowed down and the new energy they provided to the Persian language also received a severe set-back.

(a) Taming The Urdu Elite

In the 18th century, the elite n northern India adopted Urdu along with Persian. But the first task which they

undertook was change the nature and the character of this language. Basically, Urdu was a local language composed of local words, idioms, similes and metaphors. However, amongst the Mughal bourgeoisie, which kept away from the common people and boasted of different cultural standards, Urdu was only adopted with hesitation. Mentally, this class was not ready to adopt the language of the lower class. It had inhibitions based on class consciousness.

This elite which came from Central Asia, Iran and Arabia, was mentally not prepared to accept anything of local character. Instead, it suffered from, superiority complex based on the so-called concept of pure blood. The individuals of this class, therefore, adopted measures to purify Urdu so that a clear distinction emerged between the language of the rulers and the ruled. One Sirajudin Khan Arzoo (1756) accelerated this process and raised the standard of Urdu. He declared that the standard was fit to be spoken by the king, the elite and the countries. And he name it *Urdu-i-Mualla.*

In the second phase, the process of excluding Hindi words from Urdu began. Arabic and Persian words were introduced. In this crusade of purification, Hatim, Sauda, Dard and some other poets played the pivotal role. In order to make the language pure, they emphasised that the Arabic and Persian words should be written in their original form and it was forbidden to write them in the Hindi style and pronounced as in the local idiom. After that, the similes and metaphors that had derived from Hindi over the years were all discarded and they were replaced by Persian ones. In his *Aab-i-Hayat* Maulana Mohammad Hussain Azad has noted the Persian and Hindi similes which clearly indicate the cultural differences arising out of the different cultural surroundings in which the two languages developed.

Writing on this aspect of Urdu, Mohammad Hussain

Azad had noted how the Persianisation and Arabicisation of Urdu cut its rootedness in from its own environment. All the similes are denied the Indian background and in their place the similes of Arabic and Persian (with all their alied connotations) were imposed on the language. Consequently, the new idiom that emerged had no relationship with the Indian cultural environment and thought.

The breadth of the Urdu language was further narrowed with the introduction of this snobbish attitude and the idea of *Ahl-i-zaban* (people of the language). With the creation of such a barrier only that language was accepted as standard and eloquent which was spoken by the courtier-elite. The rest of the people could speak the language all right but had no right to introduce a change in or to include their dialects and idioms in it. It was simply monopolised by the self-acclaimed champions of the elevated idiom.

In his *Darya-i-Latafat*, Inshaullah Khan writes. "According to my research, in every sector of Delhi at least one *Ahl-i-zaban* family still exists. At some places, however there are even two or three such families and yet there are some areas in which there may still be four or five of them. The localities in which these noble families are settled are Mubarak Fort, Bungalaw Syed Feroz Shah, Safdarjang Lodge." Insha has put the following conditions for belonging to the *Ahl-i-zaban*.

1. Parents belong to the capital.
2. Utilisation and achievements from the company of the Urdu *ahl-i-zaban*.
3. Liking for learning and research in Urdu.
4. Sharp mind with an aesthetic taste.

"But the mere settlement in Delhi does not qualify anyone to claim this status. By Dehlavi it is meant the person who uses the idiom and slang of Delhi. The language of

Mughalpura's people is akin to the language of the people of Lahore. The *Sayyids* of Barah have an impact of their tribe on their language. Dehlavi are only those who have a refined taste, wear proper dress, have cultured manners and whose houses reflect their taste in the decorative sphere".

He further gives his verdict about the *ahl-i-zaban*: "In short, they should seek their recognition from the king, the elite and the countries about their language, Because the poets, mathematicians ombudsmen, physicians, *sufis* and beautiful women are present in these gatherings. Here, that eloquent idiom is spoken which is authentic in its usage. When they coin new terms, the same should be accepted without question a standard Urdu by all."

Thus, limiting Urdu to a few localities of Delhi and to confirm the monopoly to propound new idiom to the *ahl-i-zaban* results in discrimination against other native speakers of the language who don't belong to the bourgeoisie. This can be further explained by citing incidents of Mir Taqi Mir. Once Qameruddin Minnat brought his poetry for examination and correction to Mir Taqi Mir who instantly inquired about the former's place of residence. When he was told that Qameruddin Minnat belonged to Soonipat, Mir Taqi Mir said contemptuously, "Syyid Saheb Urdu is an especial language of Delhi and you should not take trouble in it. Rather you should kept concentrating on Persian." Another incident occurred when Mir Taqi Mir was travelling from Delhi to Lucknow. While on his way, he found one of his companions to be a villager. Mir refused to speak to him lest his own language was polluted and the words of the uncivilised village influenced him.

Solemnising this crusade and making Urdu pure: devoid of Hindi as well as other local idiom and their influences, reflected, however, the alien mentality of the Muslim nobility

in India. From the religious point of view as well, the *ulema* tried their best to discourage. Indian manners, customs and traditions. They kept on labelling the Indian heritage as anti-Islamic. And this stubborn attitude also reflected in their views about the Urdu language. When forced by circumstances to adopt the language, they refused to accept it with the local idiom. Instead they 'purified' Urdu by giving it a Persian colour before they finally adopted it.

It is also notable that the Muslim ruling classes expelled the low class Muslims for their circle and the language used by them was never recognised as the standard language. The greatest example of this elitist behaviour towards the common man is perhaps Nazir Akberabadi, who belonged to the lower class of the society and composed his verses in the lingua-franca idiom. The Urdu monopolists refused to recognise him as one of the great poets. Even Azad did not mention him in his *'Aab-i-Hiyat'*. It is very interesting that despite all efforts to Persianise Urdu, it always ranked below it. Even the great Urdu poet, Ghalib, also accepted and acknowledged the greatness of Persian. Besides, all the great poets of Urdu ventured to write in Persian as they considered it a matter of pride. The tradition was followed by Iqbal as well and, lamenting the limits of Urdu, he also made Persian the medium of his poetic expression.

Later on, when the Urdu-Hindi dispute arose, it had behind it class conflict and class interests. In 1835, Urdu was made the language of the court and this provided an edge to the *ulema* who predominantly manned these courts. The Hindu educated classes were being deprived of their chances and thus, they demanded that along with Urdu, Hindi should also be made the court language. In defence of Urdu, a pamphlet was published from Allahabad in 1900. In this pamphlet Urdu was not defended as being the language of the Muslims but as the

language of the Muslim elite. It urged the Government to patronise the elitist language and the Government was warned against acting on the directions of the lower classes. 'If they do so', it was contended then they will be forced to form all their plans and schemes on their directions which will greatly hamper the cultural progress of the country'.

Such arguments clearly reflect the sense of superiority permeating the minds of North India's Muslims. They tried to pressurise the government in order to maintain their superior position. Thus, despite being a minority they demanded dominance over the majority on the plea that the majority was illiterate and uncivilised.

It was only during the Indian struggle for freedom, that the Muslim nobility realised the danger to their ancestral properties, positions and privileges, and began to identify Islam with Urdu. Before that they themselves had treated Urdu as inferior to Persian. But when they needed the help and strength of the common man, they began raising the slogan of protecting Urdu. They gave it a religious colour and ultimately became successful in painting Urdu as the language of the Muslims.

6

BAHISHTI ZEWAR AND THE IMAGE OF MUSLIM WOMEN

Since its appearance around the turn of the century, countless editions of the book *Bahishti Zewar* have been printed in the subcontinent. Among literate Pakistani families it is a commonly suggested reading for young women, married or about to be married. The author provides the historical and sociological context of this book.

Muslim Indian society of the medieval period was highly hierarchical. In the upper layer of the society was the nobility, the class commanding immense amounts of money and property, while the rest of Muslim India consisted of common people and the low-caste. The creation of values, standardization of morality, promotion of cultural, social and political activity had always remained the prerogative of the upper classes who controlled the economic nerves of the country. They emphasized greatly their family prestige and social recognition while with respect to women they greatly stressed chastity and virginity with a strong emphasis on their obedient character. Their concept of family honour was entirely different from the masses. This rich crust of the Muslim Indian society maintained itself with all grandeur, pomp and show. Their houses were full of rich and costly commodities; best jewelry to wear and best horses and elephants for riding and

transport. They had the most sophisticated and costly dresses and ate a rich diet. Similarly, an *Amir* or Muslim chief collected for his Harem, the most beautiful women to satisfy his sexual desires. Like other costly articles and commodities he also protected his women. He raised a high wall around his Harem and its gates were constantly guarded by an armed constabulary. He employed *Khwaja Saras* (eunuches) who were allowed to enter the Harem to carry on day to day jobs and routines. The women in the Harem had to observe complete *Purdah* (seclusion) so that no other man could catch a glimpse of them. It thus gave rise to values like sanctity of the Harem, respect and family honor. Such elitist values influenced immensely the middle strata of the Muslim Indian society as it developed, but the majority of the common people could not adopt such views and practices. Their economic needs made it necessary for them to come out of the four-walls of their houses and find ways and means to satisfy their basic necessities of life. A peasant woman, apart from her domestic work and family duties, had also look after the domestic animals and work side by side with men in the field. She was forced by circumstances to do all such work for the fulfilment of the economic needs of the family. In the urban centers the working class people had different occupations. They served the nobility and the rich classes as domestic servants at a meagre salary for their menial work and very often remained victims of their sexual abuses. The upper class values, thus, remained confined to their own circles and had minimal impact on the society as a whole.

The medieval social order of Muslim India remained intact and consolidated during the period of the Sultanate of Delhi and the Mughals. Throughout the history of the period the status of women was nothing other than that of a commodity, and she remained permanently the property of a

man. As a man's property and at his mercy, she sacrificed her freedom, her self-respect and her ego. Her very upbringing in such a social set-up left little or no scope for her upbringing, she was to serve her parents as a daughter, as a second rate child in comparison to the male child. At the age of puberty she was married so that she may not be able to accept other Influences and gain a sense of maturity. Thus, from the very adolescent period she became the property of a new master. As a wife, it was her duty to serve her husband faithfully and obediently, while as a mother she had to dedicate her life to the well-being and progress of her children. In all the three stages of her life, her own self, her wishes, her emotions, passions, her desires and aspirations were so crushed that she almost lost her identity and her very existence as a woman. She was deprived of all opportunities and resources, denied all the avenues to exert and maintain her femininity and individuality and she was denied all the chances to enjoy life as a women!

Thus, in this elitist society man enjoyed complete superiority and his position remained highly elevated by such values. He was happy with such a status-quo and had the ardent desire that these values should never change lest it provide a chance to the woman to unchain herself and become independent. But with the changing times, changes in the social and moral values were imminent. Contact with the West had its own vital impact on the Muslim Indian society. Western modes and thoughts, civilization and culture, slowly and gradually began influencing the archaic structure of society. Their increasing influences alarmed the champions of the old values. They were opposed to any change and particularly, they were not prepared to change the specified status of a woman under any circumstances.

These champions of the old values, of a stagnant social order and proponents of the status-quo were best represented by

Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (1868-1943), a religious scholar of repute and influence in the Muslim Indian society. Through his writing and particularly through his famous book *Bahishti Zewar* (Ornament for gaining Paradise), the Maulana tried to arrest the rising influence of Western thought and its impact on the life of Muslim women. The period of the Maulana was one of turbulence and turmoil; it was the era of collision and the rising conflict of the old and new values. It was the period in which the old system of life and natural death and modern trends and new ideas were penetrating into the society. Maulana Thanvi, for the last time, through his concerted efforts, tried to uphold the falling aristocratic structure with the help of his religious concepts and the established norms of the outdated morality. On the same religious basis, he tried his best to keep the woman in her allotted position in the old structure of society.

Thus, for the education and training of women in the old style of life the Maulana wrote *Bahishti Zewar* in ten parts so that after its reading, the woman may easily accept the superiority of man and not only remain contented with her slavery but she may consider it a matter of pride. Through this book the Maulana indicated all the ways and means that could make women good and useful slaves. The book covers almost all aspects of human life with definitive instructions to deal with a given situation. The theme of the book ranges from religious issues and problems to cookery and other various suggestions for the maintenance and upkeep of the house. His instructions and directions in the book, are very clearly based on the concept of an inferior being and how she should act to please the man. As such, in the middle and upper sections of Muslim families, it has become a common practice and custom to present his book to the daughter on the occasion of her marriage as one of the important assets of her dowry so that the

adolescent, teenaged bride should prepare herself mentally to accept the superiority of her husband as a man and also remain prepared to live as a slave, a permanent subordinate. The main objective of this exercise was the creation of an influential concept of an "ideal woman" which the Maulana so profoundly projected through his book. His conceptions and ideals, the remnants of aristocratic culture and values, need a critical analysis.

(a) Western Education

Modern Western education had gained a good deal of popularity at the close of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. Elitist Indians, including the reformist Muslim middle-classes, were now rallying around the new system of education which had achieved considerable progress. However, our reformers, despite accepting the modern system of education, opposed women's education vehemently in India. They considered modern education as of vital importance for the male but the same education for women was not only dangerous but would have serious consequences. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, the leading Muslim educationist, bluntly declared that he opposed female education on the ground that an uneducated woman remained unaware of her rights and as such led a contented life. If after seeking modern education she became aware of her rights, her life would be sheer hell.[2] Sir Syed opposed the establishment of educational institutions for women and stressed in his advice that girls should only concentrate on religious books. They should keep themselves away from the books of the modern era which according to him were disruptive and harmful for them.[3] Similarly, Maulana Thanvi found religious education necessary for women without which they could not distinguish between infidelity and faith,

and as such fail to cultivate a respect and love for Islam and *Imam* (faith). For this reason, the Maulana considered religious education a vital necessity for women. Except for religious education, the Maulana was deadly opposed to all other education for women. He considered modern education for girls and women highly injurious and harmful.[4]

Maulana Thanvi was greatly opposed to sending girls to educational institutions, even if they were exclusively set up for them. He argued that in such institutions, girls of different nationalities, of different classes, ideas and backgro nd would gather together and the inter-mixing would have a very harmful effects on their thoughts and morals. And if, God forbid, the teacher was enlightened and a free-thinker, it would greatly influence the character of the girl. If a European missionary were imparting instructions in such schools, then the very concept of chastity and faith would be jeopardized.[5] According to him, the best way of imparting female education was to collect a few girl students in a family house where they should be taught by a female teacher who sought no salary but taught as an act of blessing.[6] The Maulana was fully aware that mutual relationships and contact left a deep impression on thoughts and minds. As such, he wanted to curb most contacts and desired that women should remain confined within the four-walls of their house.

The Maulana also greatly emphasized a special curriculum for women in order to prepare a particular mind through it. For that reason, he considers the Quran, religious books and the ten parts of the *Bahishti Zewar* sufficient for female education. In the study of *Bahishti Zewar* the Maulana advised that sections relating to sex and sexual problems should be read with the help of a mature woman and if that were not possible then these portions should be marked and left to be read after attaining sufficient maturity. The Maulana was

opposed to imparting writing skills to women. According to him only those women who are timid may be given such instructions as to make them able to write as well.[7] If a female child was taught how to read and write as well, care should be taken so that she would only be able to write simple letters and the accounts of the family.[8]

The kind of books a woman should not read received special attention from the Maulana. He emphasized that books of romance and love affairs should remain absolutely out of their reach. Collections of poetry and the new novels of his era should not be read by women at any cost and he prohibited the purchasing of novels by the family. If one saw his daughter reading a novel, he should snatch it away and burn it.[9] The maulana disapproved even some religious books and said that every kind of religious book was unsuitable for them because a great many wrong and false stories had been included in these which would do harm to the simple mind. On this point he felt highly dejected that in his era women had begun reading all types of literature which as harming them immensely. In view of such conditions, the Maulana advised that if a woman had to read a religious book, she should show it first to a religious scholar or a religious man and only after his approval should she read it herself.[10] The Maulana was not satisfied with such stipulations apprehending that sometimes religious men or authorities could by mistake allow such books to be read as might turn out to be harmful to women. As such he provided his own list of recommended, and proscribed, books. The Maulana considered novels a negative influence on the mind. He did not even allow the reading of newspapers as he thought it merely a waste of time.[11] Thus it is clear that he had an abhorrence for female education as such. He allowed only a limited scope for women and by keeping them practically illiterate, ignorant and absolutely backward, he wanted to

uphold a decaying society and to protect the aristocratic values.

(b) Male Superiority

One of the bases of male superiority in the upper-class society has been the fact that men are considered responsible for the economic needs of the family and economically the woman remains at his mercy. Being economically dependent on a man, she has found it difficult to challenge his superiority and liberate herself from gender-based oppression. The Maulana insisted that all economic pursuits were the sole domain of men and it was their duty to provide the basic needs of women.[12] Explaining the basic needs, he said that provision of food and clothing was the responsibility of women. Articles like soap, oil, comb and water for cleanliness before prayer and bathing were to be provided by the man, but articles of beautification and make-up like *Surma* (collyrium), *Missi* (a coloring for the mouth), betel and tobacco were to be provided by the woman. A woman should do the laundry herself and if the man pays for the washing, she should remain grateful.[13]

(c) Obedience to the Man

The husband in the old aristocratic society virtually had the status of God for a woman and, therefore, it was incumbent upon her to remain obedient. The violation of her husband's will was considered a violation of social values. The Maulana gave detailed instructions in this regard and he wanted to maintain the superiority of man on the grounds of religion and morality. He strongly emphasized that women should carry out all the commands of their husbands without any questioning. If the husband called her, she should immediately attend to him even if she were engaged in some important domestic task.[14]

Even her religious right was made subject to the approval of the man. According to the Maulana, if the man did not allow the woman to do so, she should not offer *Nafil* (optional prayer) and should not observe optional fastings. One the other hand, the Maulana advised women to resort to make-up and try to beautify themselves in order to please their husbands. The man, according to him, had a right to beat the woman if despite his instructions she did not care to groom herself. The Maulana imposed the condition that a woman should not go out to visit her relatives or others without the express permission of the man.[15]

The Maulana considered the main object of the life of a wife the happiness and pleasure of her husband. He imparted complete instructions to a wife for this purpose. For example, he advised the woman to keep the man attracted to her and to understand and act on the slightest hint of his desire. Her wisdom and betterment lay in implicit obedience to her husband's every command. She should under to circumstances admonish and abuse her husband because it would be a sinful act destroying her world and the life hereafter. The woman should not demand more money for her expenses nor should she ask for anything of her choice and liking. She should not utter a single word if any of her desires were not satisfied. She should not be obstinate in any matter and if she had to face trouble, instead of groaning and grumbling she should maintain a happy face. If the husband brought her presents she should express the fullest joy irrespective of her likes and dislikes. If the husband became angry she should not do anything to provoke him further. She should talk according to the mood of her husband. If he wanted merriment and was in a light mood then the wife should talk in a way that pleased him further, and if he got angry, she should try to soothe him by seeking forgiveness with folded hands. The Maulana commanded the

woman not to consider her husband as her equal. He directed the woman not to take any service from him. In her behaviour, she should consider the dignity of her husband as the most necessary element.

If the husband returned from a long journey, the wife must massage him, and in summer, she should fan and try to comfort him. She must immediately arrange for his food. In the matter of family expenses the wife had no right to task for a percentage of his pay. She had no right to question the amount given for family expenses even if the man's salary was sufficiently high for him to have given her more. She had no right to inquire into the expenses of her husband. Likewise, she must maintain in impeccable condition all the things used by her husband.

The Maulana advised, contrary to human nature, that if the husband developed relations with some other woman, the wife should try to persuade him to abstain in complete confidence, and if the husband did not do so, she should suffer in silence. The Maulana, in this regard, said that God created man as a lion who could not be subdued by pressure and power. To subdue him the woman must resort to such tactics as flattery and complete obedience.[16] In this connection the Maulana described the (pathetic) story of a woman from Lucknow. Her husband was a man of bad character. He passed whole days and nights among prostitutes. He did not visit the family and on the contrary, sent orders to his wife to prepare and send sumptuous meals to him. But the wife never complained and kept obeying the commands of her husband. Presenting it as an example of commendable behaviour, he asserted that the entire people of the locality were full of praise for her. Her rewards would come in the world hereafter![17] Maulana Thanvi further said that the wife should not keep herself isolated from her in-laws and should accept their home as her own. He also forbids her to call

her husband and the other elders by their names and terms this obscene.[18] The Maulana further gave verdict that women should not play *Pachisi* or *Chausar* (old indoor Indian games) and cards.[19] The Maulana also cautions women not to use dresses that expose the body, being too tight or thin. The best dress for women, according to his description, was the shirt with long sleeves and of thick fabric that could wrape her fully and cover her completely.[20]

(d) The Social Life of a Woman

The Maulana remains fully convinced that it was best to keep the woman within the four-walls of her house life a tamed animal and provided a time chart that deserves attention. For example, she could visit her parents once a weak, but she was allowed to visit other relatives only once a year. Similarly the parents of the woman could visit her once a week and the husband had the authority to stop their frequent visits or longer stays in his house.[21] The Maulana considered visit and the participation of women in social functions harmful. He described the various occasions of social, cultural and religious rituals which were harmful for women to attend. He also disliked the practice of women visiting their relations on sad occasions. But his most particular objection was to women doing so on the occasion of marriage ceremonies. On such occasions women should not visit even those male relations with whom they do not observe *Purdah* (seclusion). If a woman were allowed by her husband to do so, then both will have committed sin in the eyes of Islamic Shariat. The Maulana sorrowfully lamented that this directive of Shariat was being flouted all over the country.[22]

According to him on such visits costly dresses and costumes were needed which would result in unnecessary

expenses for the man. The Maulana said that for the purchase of clothes for such occasions the cloth merchant would be called in by the family with his stock for selection by the *Purdah*-unnecessary details of it. Moreover, to hold the cloth from inside of the *Purdah*, the lady had to extent her hand, full of bangles and reddened with *Hena*, fully in view of the cloth merchant, a matter of great disgrace.

Besides, on such occasions, some women would have to return home on foot which was not only highly objectionable; but particularly on moonlit nights also a most shameful spectacle. When they were riding in a *Doli* (a covered palanquin for the ladies, carried by labourers), some women might carelessly allow parts of their clothing to slip out of the drapes. If for some reason, the drape suddenly lifted it would leave behind a trail of scent along with a glimpse of the *Purdah*-observing lady to outsiders. According to him women carelessly leaving the *Doli* in haste sometimes forgot that an unrelated male might be sitting in the house. Moreover, when the water-carrier came into the house, he might cover his face but he would be able to see the women of the house. Sometimes grown up boys freely entered the house of the hosts which injured the very spirit of *Purdah*. Because of these reason the Maulana was opposed to women's participation in any function or customs which gave them an opportunity to leave the privacy of their house leading to shameful and disgraceful situations.

Bahishti Zewar reflects fully the mind created by decadent aristocratic culture and values. But it could not act as a barrier against modern trends, thoughts and rising social consciousness of the 20th century. It could not uphold and give stability to the dying old and outdated culture, customs and traditions. Yet it is interesting that this text continues to be printed, marketed and handed down to the successive generations of young women in the Islamic Republic of

Pakistan. This is, perhaps, more symptomatic of commercial enterprise cashing in on male-dominated politics of religion and morality than anything else. The book had obviously no relevance to the lives of millions of toiling rural and urban women in Pakistan. The salaried working class is apparently the biggest market for *Bahishti Zewar*. But the women of this class too are more concerned today with personal safety as they make their way to school and work, rather than catering to the comforts of their menfolk within the security of their four walls. As for the very rich, whether from the landed aristocracy or the bourgeoisie, their women no longer create hazards of vicarious temptation by leaving behind whiffs of perfume through the opening of their draped palanquins. They rather create health hazards through the exhaust fumes of their imported cars. He *Bahishti Zewar* become a potent fetish, then, to ward off demonic threats to Pakistan's patriarchal rule? Is it read at all by those who end up in possession of it, and how does it influence their ideal intergender relationship? These are questions for further research.

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7

FUNDAMENTALISM:

Origin of the term

In the modern world the process of Europeanisation has become global and western scholars concentrate on studying all cultural, social, and political movements; and in order to understand them, coin new terms and apply modern research methodology to known their origin and their impact on world politics. As most of the Asian and African scholars lack the scholarship and academic experience, they readily accept these definitions and apply them in their writings.

The term of fundamentalism, in the western context, is not new. It was first used in the 19th century for some Christian sects who followed the extremist religious teachings. In the global context, it became popular after the overthrow of the Shah of Iran and the assumption of power by Imam Khomeini and his fanatic religious followers.

Some of the Muslim scholars criticise the term and argue that to apply it to Islam and Muslims is not correct as every Muslim believes in the fundamentals of Islam and as such he is a fundamentalist, not negatively but positively. However, in spite of this criticism, personally I believe that there are common elements in the present fundamentalist movements in Islam and the Christian sects who adhered to fanatical religious views to achieve their ends.

As I have already pointed out, this term was first used in North America for the Baptist and Presbyterian sects who

believed in the doctrine of innerrancy of the Bible, the supernatural atonement; the physical resurrection of Jesus; the virgin birth of Jessus; and the authenticity of the Gospel miracles. Besides these five beliefs they refused to accept the authenticity of the theory of evolution and believed in the religious concept of Creation. The characteristic of these sects was that they strictly followed these teachings without any compromise.

Therefore, they were intolerant, aggressive, and uncompromising in their attitude. As they believed in the truthfulness of their beliefs, they justified the use of force in implementing them.

They vehemently opposed all those ideas which contradicted their beliefs; hence, liberalism, secularism, and democracy were regarded as the great dangers in the propagation of their views.

To implement their religious ideas, they planned a systematic programme which included the expulsion of those teachers from church schools who held opposite views and kept only those who subscribed to their beliefs. Secondly, they pressurised the American states to expunge the theory of evolution from the syllabus and, instead of it, include the religious concept of creation. Under their pressure, the legislative assembly of Tennessee passed a law in 1925 that the theory of evolution should not be taught in the educational institutions of the state. Their efforts, to get passed the same law from other southern states however, failed.

The characteristics of the fundamentalist movement in America were: first, total rejection of rationality; therefore, the adherents of these sects tried to popularise their beliefs after mobilising the emotions of the people. Second, not believing in human reason; they relied on the divine power to lead humanity on the right path. Third, they were not ready to have any

compromise on their beliefs. Fourth, as they regarded themselves true, rightly guided followers of religion, they treated all others as their enemies. Fifth, they were ready to sacrifice their lives for the sake of their beliefs. Similarly, they were also ready to kill their religious opponents as misguided people. Sixth, once they monopolised the truthfulness and declared all others as sinners, they lost all respect for the democratic institutions, human rights, and human values and fanatically made attempts to thrust their religious views on others even by adopting violent methods.

The fundamentalist movement in North America did not succeed because it was out of the context of the American mainstream: Rapid industrialisation and the ambition for the global political domination could not afford the fundamentalist approach of life which excluded the broader participation of the people and hampered the democratic traditions. Therefore, it remained confined to the southern states, which were agricultural and backward in comparison to the northern states. It proved a passing stage and disappeared without much impact on the American society.

(a) Fundamentalists and revivalists

There is a close relationship between fundamentalism and revivalism because the basic concept of the revivalist movements is "Return to the Past". The past is painted by them as glorious and ideal. According to their beliefs, the society in the early phase of religion (Christianity, or Islam or Judaism) was pure and simple, the people were honest and the society enjoyed peace and prosperity.

This ideal society deteriorated with the passage of time and every change, as a matter of fact, corrupted the purity of the religion up to the extent that the real and pure religion

disappeared and lost its original character. The result is that with the loss of the purity of religion, the followers too became polluted and failed to adhere to the true and real religious teachings.

Therefore, according to their argument, changes which occurred as a result of the historical process are responsible of distorting religion. The solution of the moral degradation, spiritual degeneration, and the growth of materialistic tendencies is to go back to the past and revive the purity of the religion.

The revivalist movements, in order to mobilise people, appeal to their sentiments and idealise past glory by portraying the virtues of the early phase of the religion. They convince the people that the solution of all modern evils and problems lies in their journey back to the past, dismantling all the changes which occurred from time to time, till they reach the roots.

Here, both the revivalists and fundamentalists share each other's view. Both believe in on the sanctity of the revealed Books, and that those who oppose them are unbelievers and should be treated severely. They strongly believe in the righteousness of their religion and distrust all other religions as false. Both believe that every thing happens according to the Divine will and not as a consequence of the natural process.

Therefore, they threaten the people with the Divine wrath and ask them to follow them or they will be perished as a result of their disobedience. Their world view is pessimistic and they wait for the end of the world. To face the eventual end, both refrain from taking part in any entertainment or festivity. They discourage music, literature, and devote all their energies to propagating religious teachings.

Thus, their religious activities are out of tune with their social relations with family, relatives, and friends.

Their strict and uncompromising attitude alienates them from other people and soon they confine themselves within their own groups, cutting themselves off from the mainstream of society. The alienation and separation from the mainstream prevent them from playing an active role. By separating themselves from the community, they try to retain their virtues, but lose their vitality and energy and ultimately reduce themselves to a prejudiced, narrow-minded, and fanatical sect. A very heavy price, indeed, for the sake of their beliefs.

So far fundamentalist and revivalist movements succeeded partly in the backward, authoritarian, and suppressed societies where people resorted to passivity after long period of exploitation. These movements assured their deliverance from the above and thus gained their support. But these movements failed to solve problems, and in the end, retired or were forced to disappear from the active part, again, leaving the people helpless to face the crisis.

(b) Anti-westernism and fundamentalism

The outburst of fundamentalism in most of the Muslim countries is not a new phenomenon. On the contrary, its roots lie deep in history and it has appeared from time to time in different shapes. The new phenomenon, however, is the result, mostly, of anti-western feelings. As most of the Muslim countries were colonised by western powers and were repeatedly exploited, humiliated, and betrayed by them, the Muslim population lost their confidence in them and now find western hand in every crisis to weaken the Muslims.

Political leaders of the Muslim countries consisted of the small groups of western-educated intellectuals and thus secularism, liberalism, and humanism. After independence, they made attempts, instead of decolonisation of colonial

institutions, to retain them and use them for the scientific and technological advancement of their countries.

Most of them tried to perpetuate their leadership over the masses and develop different forms of democracy or socialism to suit them. Lack of sincerity and use of the political systems to consolidate and enhance their own personal powers, exposed their intellectual bankruptcy, inefficiency and corruption. Instead of solving the problems of the people, they increased their miseries and added to their grievances. Independence has become a myth and a mockery.

When these Muslim leaders failed to solve the problems of the people through western political systems and their rule and power was challenged they, in the last resort to save their rule turned towards political Islam and accused the western institutions of being unfamiliar and alien to the Muslim countries and thus incapable of guiding their societies. In a process of Islamisation, they coined the new terms of Islamic democracy, Islamic socialism, or Islamic economics and won the support of the people who hoped that the new Islamic order would, ultimately, changed their fate.

To appease the religious sentiments of the people, in most of the Muslim countries, the mass media were used for political propaganda and the *azan* and *salat* relayed from the radio and TV. Religious festivals were declared as holidays. The *chadars* were offered to the tombs of the famous saints and governments started to participating in their annual '*urs*'. New mosques and other religious buildings were constructed at governments expense. It was the secular leadership in the Muslim countries which introduced Islam as a political weapon in politics and encouraged religious activities. Once religion became a part of active politics, it was fully utilised by the ulema and the religious parties.

The failure of secular leadership and their political

exhaustion provided full opportunity to those religious parties who were so far insignificant but now emerged with a vitality to convince the people that the west, western-educated intellectuals, and the western ideas were unsuitable to Muslim societies. The salvation of the Muslims was in getting rid of the west and in following their own religion and its traditions.

Most Muslim thinkers including Iqbal, believed that the western civilisation has lost its energy and was in the process of decline; therefore, there was no use looking towards the west for guidance. The time had come to revive Islam and seek guidance from it. To strengthen their case, the revivalist parties severely criticised the secular leadership declaring them opportunist, corrupt, dishonest, alcoholist, and rapist, and appealed to the masses to overthrow their rule.

The common people were convinced because western culture, along with technology and its comforts, was confined only to an elite class. This class was the beneficiary of western education, western living, and western taste. These benefits were beyond the reach of the common man. Sense of deprivation created a deep hatred not only against the elite class but also against western culture. They vehemently opposed the freedom of women, western education, and all kinds of fine arts. They wanted to annihilate, destroy, and immolate all those things which were denied to them. The fundamentalist parties fully represented their feelings and helped them to think that they could take revenge from the secular, modernised, and privileged classes.

(c) Class structure of fundamentalist parties

The process of urbanisation in Muslim countries helped fundamentalist beliefs to deepen their roots because, when the uneducated, unskilled, and unemployed peasants come to the

cities, they soon find themselves alien, helpless, and insecure.

Poverty and starvation reduce them to the status of subhuman beings. The fundamentalist parties provide these outcasts refuge by infusing hopes for the better future. Hatred against modernisation and western culture encourage them to fight for their survival. A bright future of egalitarian society helps them to bear the burden of their grievances and fight bitterly for social justice.

Fundamentalist parties find their zealots from this crowd who are sincerely ready to sacrifice their lives for the cause.

Nearly all the fundamentalist parties represent the middle and lower classes. The upper classes, for their own interests, remain aloof from them except a few of them who help these parties financially, but no party is dominated by the feudals or big industrialists or upper class individuals.

The class structure of the fundamentalist parties determines their scope of work. For example, in Pakistan, and some of the Arab countries, *Jamat-i-Islami* and the *Akhwan-ul-Muslimeen* represent the middle class and hence their class interests. To counter western culture and its ideas, they wish to see Islam as an alternative ideology fully equipped to respond to modern challenges. Their scholars are making attempts to reinterpret Islam and make it suitable to the modern milieu. Believing that Islam has a potentiality to face challenges, they attack the political leadership and plan to grasp political power in order to implement their system by force.

As the audience of these parties belongs to the educated middle class, they try to convince them by fully utilising modern scientific methods to rationalise religious beliefs. The approach of rationalisation boosts their morale, hardens their beliefs, and closes their minds.

Even in the middle class, the interests of the different

groups are varied. Doctors, engineers, lawyers, and teachers are willing to read and appreciate if the religious beliefs are scientifically proved correct, but there are small traders, artisans, and a number of other groups who neither have time nor any will to read, understand, and then justify their beliefs. These groups are catered to by Dr. Israr and Dr Tahirul Qadri. They attentively listen to the speeches of their leaders and follow then fanatically.

The uneducated crowd of poor people sympathise with those religious parties who arouse their sentiments on religious issues. The *Anjuman Sipaha-i-Sahaba* and the *Majlis-i-Khatm-i-Nabuwwat* are such parties who occasionally raise some religious issues and make them a question of life and death. Especially in the sectarian conflicts, they find ample grounds to create religious strife.

In Pakistan, these religious parties, after partition, slowly gained grounds. The middle class-oriented parties are consolidating on the basis of their philosophy by influencing the state institutions. The parties of the lower classes are establishing their roots by creating chaos and disorder. The result is that the feudals, industrialists, and elitist ruling classes are afraid of them and in an attempt to win over their sympathies support them. The secular groups have almost lost ground and are in no position to challenge them intellectually or physically. So in absence of any alternative, the country is going to be fully controlled by the fundamentalist philosophy.

(d) Promotion of fundamentalism and the external factors

Besides internal factors, there are external forces which promoted fundamentalist movements to achieve their ends. Before the collapse of USSR and Eastern Europe, it was the policy of the USA to support, finance, and encourage the

religious movements to counter communism. The situation further changed when Saudi and the Gulf states got the royalties of their oil wealth and became the bastions of conservatism and orthodoxy.

To most of the poor Muslim countries, they became the centers of their religious loyalties. The ruling classes of these countries, conscious of their wealth, privileges, and prerogatives, made attempts to preserve the status quo, opposed any change. To these efforts, they found the weapons of religion more useful, therefore, they generously financed the religious parties, movements, and institutions throughout the Muslim world.

As a result of these generous fundings, there was a mushroom of religious parties in the 70s, and widespread religious activities. New *madrasahs* and mosques were constructed, even in small towns and villages. In Badin (Sindh), the author has seen two beautiful mosques built with the donation of a GULF state.

To get these funds and attention, the parties started intensive activities to promote their religious ideas. New religious newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, and books began to circulate in large numbers and revived the dormant religious interest of the people. Some of the old religious issues got new life and religious discussions became matters of common interests. Religious festivals began to be celebrated with fervour, especially in case they provoked sectarian conflicts.

Now the position is that, besides religious beliefs, most of the followers earn their livelihood from the parties which converted them as zealous supporters. Therefore, whenever their existence is threatened, they resort to violence, religious strife and sectarian clash. By organising religious conferences, holding demonstrations, and public meetings they show their strength and power.

After the Gulf war, the situation has greatly changed and there are possibilities that they won't get generous funding from the oil-rich Arab countries but they have already deepened their local roots and are in a position to get finances from local fundings.

Another external factor which indirectly helped the fundamentalist parties to increase their influence is that repeated defeat of the Muslims at the hands of their adversaries, especially the defeat of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria by Israel. The defeat of Pakistan by India and the independence of Bangladesh and recently the defeat of Iraq in the Gulf war.

These defeats and humiliations created deep sense of helplessness and passivity. The west emerged as the bitter enemy of the Muslim world which consequently encouraged the fundamentalist parties to reject everything from the west and present Islam as the only alternative to save them from disaster. These parties argue that only by following the Islamic teachings could the Muslims of the world be united to take revenge from the west. The tragedy is that in the absence of any other voice, people have to listen to what they say.

(e) Fundamentalism vs democracy

Usually fundamentalist parties are not popular among the masses, they are close-knit and confined only to their staunch adherents. Following a strict and sometimes controversial religious policy, they alienate the majority of the people from their support. As a result of this, their chances to win election are always bleak. Therefore, they don't believe in democracy and popular representation and ridicule the whole democratic process.

Rejecting popular appeal, they resort to other methods to grasp political power and change the character and morality

of the people with the he help of state institutions.

In the past, the efforts of these groups and individuals were to convert the influential and powerful nobles and by using them to thrust their beliefs on the people Ahmad Sarhindi throughout his life tried to convert the highest Mughal *mansabdars* in his favour and used their influence in implementing his beliefs. Same was the policy of Shah Waliullah who persuaded all the powerful chiefs of his time to help him in putting his ideas into practice.

In modern times, the situation has changed, but their approach, more or less, remains the same. They always prefer dictatorship, martial law, and authoritarian governments over democracy and support these governments in the hope to win them over and then persuade them, cajole them or force them to implement their religious policies. Usually, they succeed in getting the support of these governments because every dictator seeks legitimacy and justification of his rule.

This happened in Pakistan during the military rule of Zia-ul-Haq who usurped power by violating the constitution of 1973 and was badly in need of legitimacy of his rule. He used political Islam as a weapon and declared that it was his mission to purify the society and implement the *Shariat*. To win over the support of different sections of the *ulema* and *mashaikh*, he fully supported their parties. The result was that the fundamentalist parties fully exploited his weaknesses and pressurised him to Islamise education and the media. He readily implemented all such reforms and vowed to make the country a true Islamic one.

The process of Islamisation radically changed the whole direction of Pakistan and the process of secularisation and modernisation received a set-back.

One of the characteristics of the fundamentalist parties is that mostly they raise religious-political issues and never

emphasise the social problems of the society such as poverty, hunger, health, or illiteracy. They claim that once they are in power, they would solve all social problems by working the magic wand of their beliefs.

Moreover, they regard people as passive who are waiting to be guided and directed. Therefore, they assume the role of the guide and claim that only through their guidance the salvation of the society is possible. This assumption makes these parties divine and, hence, never to be challenged or criticised.

The authoritarian nature of these parties can be fully understood after looking at the party's structure which is hierarchical, there are either nominations by the higher authority or a limited type of election. The chief of the party enjoys extensive administrative and executive powers. Complete obedience of the chief is the requirement. Usually the lower cadre is not allowed to take part decision-making. His only duty is to follow the policies of the party without questions. These brain-washed followers can be used for any purpose such as to enhance and consolidate the party's image. It is quite natural that in the presence of such parties, democracy and liberal ideas cannot take root in the society. This is what we are facing in Pakistan nowadays.

(f) Fundamentalism and its victims

The first victim of the fundamentalist parties are the religious minorities. They direct their full wrath on these minorities and depict them as dangerous to society and country. The reason for attacking the minorities is their vulnerability and political weakness. It is easy to terrorise them and subdue them, which creates a sense of triumph among the followers.

Further, they believe that by attacking the religious

minorities they would be able to mobilise the majority and win over their sympathy. For example, in Pakistan, the Ahmadis are the victims. A campaign is launched against them and efforts are made to exclude them from all government jobs and armed services. They are projected as a threat to the state, as allies of the Zionists, having a secret plan to capture the government. Once the majority is mobilised against a minority, the latter becomes defenceless and easily surrenders.

In Iran, after the Islamic Revolution, the Bahais were brutally persecuted and excluded from all government jobs. In Egypt, the scopts are the victims. The result of this victimisation usually proves disastrous to the society. It alienates minorities from the mainstream and by shattering their loyalty, the society is deprived of their contribution.

The second victim are women. Religiously it is believed that women are inferior to men, root of all evil, weak and stupid, and without an understanding of worldly affairs. Therefore, the main responsibility of women is to bear children, rear them, and devote their time to domestic work. Outside home, it is a male-dominated world and women are not allowed to interfere in this world by freely walking, talking, and participating in its activities. To overstep from the boundary means aggression. Therefore, the attempts of all fundamental parties are to keep women confined within the four walls and deprive them of any opportunity to compete with man.

The third victim of the fundamentalist parties are those people who have secular, liberal, and enlightened outlook, especially the intellectuals and the political activists. Their extremist views of the fundamentalists. Therefore, these parties regard them as the most dangerous enemies and take all measures to eliminate them.

As the first step, they are terrorised, and in the second

stage they are crushed financially. In Pakistan, they are dubbed as anti-state, anti-ideology, and thus traitors. The fundamentalist parties are in a position to direct the government to restrict the activities of the liberal intellectuals. For example, they are expelled from radio and TV, and are not allowed to get government jobs. Their books are not purchased by government libraries and they are not permitted to speak in government institutions. Once they are made outcasts, they face immense problems. Even the private publishers are afraid to print their writings. The booksellers refuse to sell their books. Censorship and restrictions completely exhaust their energies, and finding no opening, either they keep silence or leave the country. In both cases, the idea of liberalism and secularism suffers immensely.

Having subdued and controlled these elements the parties established their monopoly over art, literature, and public media and use them for the propagation of their views. All parties agree on one point, i.e. to demolish the democratic and secular structure of the society and influence the parliament in its law-making. Instead of normal law-making they want to impose the divine laws and their own divine dictatorships to mould the character of the people.

(g) Fundamentalism: Propaganda and violence

The rise of the fundamentalist parties in the Muslim countries is the result of the different social, political, and economic problems and crises. However, all these parties agree on one point that all the Muslim societies are not truly Islamic, and in the absence of the *Shariat*, they are just like the pre-Islamic societies of the Days of Ignorance *(Ayyam-i-Jahilliyah)*.

Although the rulers of these countries are professedly Muslims, in reality they are deemed hypocrites and dishonest.

A pure Islamic society can only be built after the elimination of these rulers. That was the reason that one religious party just after the creation of Pakistan, appealed to the government employees not to take the oath of loyalty unless the government declared itself Islamic.

Therefore, it is the policy of the fundamentalist parties to oppose the government on every issue and, after exploiting the religious sentiments of the people, press the ruling elite to introduce the *Shariat*. Sometimes the government, to appease them and win their support, implement some clauses of the *Shariat* in practice, but they are never satisfied by these half-hearted steps and demand the full implementation of the Shariat.

In Pakistan, under Zia-ul-Haq, some Islamic laws were implemented but these parties were not satisfied and condemned Zia as not sincere enough to Islamise the whole society. Islamic reforms under Anwar Sadaat also failed to satisfy them and ultimately he paid with his life.

To popularise their teachings and win the support and sympathy of the people, the fundamentalists adopted two methods. First, the *tabligh* (preaching) by organising mass meetings, personally contacting individuals, publishing magazines, pamphlets, and books in order to disseminate their ideas and beliefs. They specially organise students and women wings and, fully knowing the significance of mosques, occupy them in every mohallas and use them for preaching their programmes. They concentrate on student and control educational institutions with armed violence.

Their second method to assert their ideology is violence. It is their belief that those who oppose them are the enemy of God, a bunch of atheists, godless people, and therefore deserve to die. First, by terrorising them to silence them; in the second stage, they eliminate them which also

serves as a warning to others. Akhwanul Muslemeen made a number of attempts on the life of Nasir and ultimately one of them succeeded in killing Sadaat.

Those individuals who adopt secular ideas are regarded by them as *murtad*, the man who renounces Islam, and thus punishable by death. To legitimate it, the fatwa is issued in this regard which makes it obligatory on every Muslim to kill the said person. In Iran, during the Shah, a liberal advocate Khusrau was killed when the religious leaders sanctioned his murder. Similarly, Imam Khomeini issued the *fatwa* to kill Salman Rushdie and in spite of his recantation, the *fatwa* is not withdrawn.

Most fundamentalists believe in an international conspiracy against Islam and blame every crisis on these enemies. Among these enemies are the Jews, European, Americans, communists, and those who have secular tendencies. In Pakistan, the Hindus are also included among these enemies. They have such a strong faith in the conspiracy theory that they interpret the whole economic, political, and social process from this angle.

They try their best to block the cultural influence of the west and appeal to their followers to desist from adopting western fashions and adhere to the Islamic way of life. The popularity of the fundamentalists can be seen when youths grow beards, women observe pardah, and people in general practice religious rituals in public.

Under the fundamentalist influence, publication of religious books increases and secular literature rapidly decreases. It also greatly affects the music, painting, sculpture, and dancing, and, as a whole, the society loses its glamour, and violence and dullness reigns supreme.

(h) The mission of the fundamentalist parties

The *Akhwanul Muslemeen* is the first fundamentalist party which organised itself with the mission to counter the western influence and to revive Islam with a new energy. Its founder was Hassan-al-Banna who set up the party in 1929 at Ismailiya. Later on its headquarters was shifted to Cairo. Organising a religious party, Hassan, al-Banna was careful not to involve it in religious conflicts with other religious parties. Therefore he clearly outlined the aims and objects of the party:

1. The party should retrain from all kinds of religious disputes.
2. It should not be allowed to be dominated by notables and influential individual.
3. All programmes of the party should be completed stagewise so that the final mission could be achieved concurrently.
4. The mission of the party is to capture political power. To fulfil this object, if necessary, armed struggle should be adopted.
5. Capture of political power means to establish the Islamic state. To Islamise the society, the state institutions of education, judiciary and executive be fully used.
6. The party believe in Arabs-Muslims unity.
7. To strengthen Muslim unity, all Muslim countries should be united to fight against anti-Muslim powers.

Hassan al-Banna clearly explained the motives of his party; only after capturing political power, the party could implement its programme.

The *Akhwan* no longer remained confined to Egypt. Its

influence spread to other Arab countries, such as Syria and Iraq. It definitely influenced Maulana Maudoodi in the establishment of the *Jamaat-i-Islami*. During Nasir and Sadaat, the *Akhwan* faced crises in Egypt and received setbacks when its leaders were either executed or imprisoned.

Consequently, the inactivity of the *Akhwan* caused a number of different fundamentalist groups to grow. They are more extremist than the *Akhwan* and believe in the policy of violence and terrorism. Prominent among them are *Al-Tokeir-wa-al-Hijra, Hizb-al-Tahrir al-Islam,* and *Jamat-al-Jihad.*

These groups believe that Islam is a perfect system and can guide the whole humanity. Therefore, they strive for the implementation of the *shariat* and the elimination of all western laws. It is their contention that those Muslim governments who are in power and refuse to follow the *Shariat*, they should be over-thrown by armed struggle, It is also obliged to fight against the non-Muslim religious minorities and against those ulema and intellectuals who support the present non-Islamic governments. In their opinion, the path of *jehad* is the only method which paves the way for an Islamic state.

These groups are working side by side with the *Akhwan* and they have special attraction for the youth who are greatly disillusioned by the society and readily join these group in the hope to change the society for the betterment of the Muslims in general.

The fundamentalist parties are not only active in those Muslim countries where there are some sort of democratic and secular set up such as Egypt and Algeria, but have organised themselves in orthodox countries such as Saudi Arabia. Here the fundamentalists believe that the ruling classes are corrupted by oil wealth and thus have renounced the simplicity and purity of Islam. The capture of the Kaaba in 1979 by Abdullah al-Qahtani was evidence of their frustrations. They declared that it

was their mission to overthrow the corrupt Saudi rulers and set up a legitimate government.

At present nearly all the Muslim countries are facing the menace of fundamentalism. Even Turkey, which avowedly proclaims secularism as its state ideology, is threatened by sympathetic waves from fundamentalism.

In US and western countries where there are considerable number of Muslims, the sentiments of fundamentalism are growing as an alternative against the west. Fundamentalism has become a source of their identity. The question is can fundamentalism help the Muslims to respond to the modern challenges? If not, then what is the other alternative?

(i) Trends of fundamentalism in the Indian Muslim Society

With the establishment of the rule of the Muslim dynasties in India, fundamentalist and revivalist movements took their roots in the Muslim society. Especially when the Muslims after their social and economic relationships with the Hindus, adopted some of their cultural traditions in their daily routine of life.

It was vehemently condemned by the *ulema* as a threat to the purity of Islam and attempts were made to exclude non-Islamic rituals and customs from the Muslim society and revive the Islamic values. Those ulema who took part in this campaign were Sheikh Yehya Muneeri, Mehdi Jaunpuri, Ahmad Sirhindi, and Shah Waliullah. Although the impact of their movements remained limited and they never gained popularity, the germs of discontent lurked alive.

Islam and the Muslim society faced a real challenge when the Mughals declined and the British established their political domination. As long as the Muslims enjoyed political

power, there were no external or internal challenges to their religion. As the Hindu religion was not a missionary one, it did not compete with Islam in the matter of conversion. But the long period of the Muslim rule sucked away the energies of the Muslims and their society lost all vitality to play an effective role. The battles of Plassy (1757) and Buxer (1762) completely exhausted their energies and they no longer remained in a position to resist.

Failure of the political leadership provided opportunity to the ulema to organise themselves and struggle to regain the old political glory. In the 1820s, Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed started the *jihad* movement with two specific purpose: to purify Islam from the Hindu customs; and to establish an Islamic state on the model of the early Islamic period.

In Bengal, Sharitaullah also attempted to organise the exploited peasants on the basis of religion and fight against the Hindu feudals. These movements failed because of their limited scope and strong resistance from their adversaries. The events of 1857 disillusioned them and hope to change the political situation, after armed resistance, were dashed to the ground. This failure followed exhaustion and disappointment. A sadness reigned over the whole of India.

However, the Muslim society, as a reaction started to probe the causes of their decline and defeat. As a result there emerged two trends in the Muslim society.

(1) The *ulema*, by determining the cause of the decline, blamed the Muslims as a whole who had renounced the Islamic teachings and were involved in worldly matters. The cure of their humiliation was the revival of Islam and adherence to its teachings. It followed the organisation of the fundamentalist and revivalist parties such as the *Deobandi*, the *Farangi Mahal*, and the *Ahl-i-Hadis*.

(2) There was a tiny group of intellectuals who opposed

the fundamentalist and revivalist trends and believed that Islam had a vitality to change according to the requirements of time. Their efforts were to modernise Islam under the influence of western civilisation. In India, Sayyid Ahmad Khan was the first to popularise the concept of the Progressive Islam.

The basic difference between these trends was that the fundamentalists abhorred everything which was western. They emphasised separation rather than compromise. The progressives believed in blending western thought with Islamic beliefs and reforming the society. One looked backward and found the solution in the past; while the other looked forward and worked for future betterment.

In the Indian subcontinent, all the fundamentalist movements remained active while the progressive forces failed to attract the society. The reason for the failure of the progressive trends and success of fundamentalism was the feudal structure of our society.

In the absence of any industrialisation, the enlightened ideas were not patronised. Sir Sayyid's movement remained confined only to the 'salariat' class and failed to appeal to the larger section of the Muslims.

The same was the case of Ghulam Ahmad Parvez movement which influenced a tiny western educated class who wished to see parallels in Islam and socialism. Soon it disappeared with changes in political and economic situation. The fundamentalist parties, on the other hand, are supported by the feudals and crowds of the illiterate. They are becoming more strong and active as the roots of the feudalism are growing stronger and illiteracy is spreading rapidly in our society.

(j) Origin of Hindu fundamentalism

The establishment and consolidation of the British

power brought a change and a new outlook to Hindu society. Their intellectuals started to probe the causes of its backwardness and stagnation. They soon realised that in the changing situation of the word, the Hindu society could not survive. Therefore, for the survival of the Hindu society, the only alternative was to reform it and liberate it from the orthodox and out-of-date rituals and customs.

To fulfil this mission, different reforms movements, such as *Brahmo Samaj*, started with full force and vigour to modernise Hindu religion according to the requirements of the time.

In the absence of historical writings and non-availability of religious and philosophical manuscripts, the concept of the golden past was non-existent in the Hindu society. That was the reason why there were only reform movements and no revivalist trends. The concept of the Hindu golden past was the creation of the Royal Asiatic Society, which made a programme to publish the old manuscripts after editing them.

The publications of the society discovered the significance of the Sanskrit language; the importance of the six Hindu philosophical schools of thought and the Sacredness of the *Manu Shastra*. The research of the society further brought to light the myths and symbols of Hindu religion which fascinated the European scholars as well as Hindu intellectuals.

The discovery of archaeological ruins proved the maturity of the Indian civilisation. These discoveries helped to provide the basis for the Hindu golden past which soon became an ideal of the Hindu intellectuals who appealed to the society to fight against the colonial humiliation and regain the golden past which symbolised dignity and honour.

Thus, the reconstruction of the golden past was the beginning of fundamentalism in Hindu society. However, in its early phase, the fundamentalist movement attracted only the

Brahmans and upper caste people because they were the victims of British secular system in which they lost their inherent privileges. As far as the lower caste people were concerned, the golden past provided them no dignified place. On the other hand, it symbolised their slavery, humiliation, and degradation. Therefore, their attitude towards the golden past was hostile and inimical. They refused to take any part in its revival.

The Brahmans and upper caste individuals, however, were enthusiastic to revive the old and forgotten Hindu rituals, customs, and festivals. They organised processions of Hindu deities. Gangadher Tilak was the first who started the Ganesh festival which soon became popular throughout India.

The basic approach of the Hindu revivalists was to appeal to the religious emotions of the people and, after winning their sympathies, used their energies for their political ends. However, in spite of their emotional appeals, the fundamentalist parties failed to mobilise the masses in general. They remained confined to small groups of fanatics.

After the partition of India, the secular approach of the Congress party did not provide them any opportunity to grow, but the failure of the secular and the leftist parties to solve the problems of the people created widespread discontent among the poor and deprived people and this gave ample opportunities to the fundamentalists to exploit the people on the basis of religion. The Ram Janam Bhoomi-Baburi mosque became a vital issue which was fully used by the BJP in the recent elections (1991). Although it appears that India is in full grip of communalism (fundamentalism) and religious fanaticism has become a vogue, as a matter of fact, it is not in the interest of the rising bourgeoisie of India to tolerate this process, because the communal conflicts hamper the industrial and agriculture production.

It seems that the growth of industrialisation will

ultimately weaken fundamentalism. This is the reason why there are a number of intellectuals and political movements which are vehemently opposing it and striving to popularise secularism will deepen its roots in the political system of India.

(k) Fundamentalism in Pakistan

After the partition, fundamentalism was not popular in Pakistan and the prominent religious parties were discredited because of their opposition to Pakistan Movement. Islam as a political force and ideology of the state emerged after the failure of the political leadership who ruled the country after its independence. To perpetuate their rule, leaders curbed political opposition which consequently weakened the democratic institutions.

The declaration of martial law by Ayub Khan in 1958 finally throttled the democratic procedure and established dictatorial government. This created a wide gulf between the state and the people and their participation in the affairs of the state came to an end.

In the new political structure, a few privileged groups controlled the government and utilised its resources for their comfort while the majority of the people were abandoned to face poverty, illiteracy, sickness, unemployment, and insecurity.

When in 1971 election Z.A. Bhutto raised the slogan of *roti, kapra, makan,* the multitude of hungry, poor, and deprived people supported him and helped him to win the election. But their hopes soon dashed to the ground when Z.A. Bhutto assumed authoritarian and fascist methods to rule the country.

Instead of solving the problems of the poor, he was busy in crushing the opposition and consolidating his own

personal power. Ironically, it was socialist and secular Bhutto who started the process of fundamentalism in Pakistan and under the patronage of the state the roots of fundamentalism were deepened in the Pakistani society.

The Constitution of 1973 contains a number of clauses which later on paved the way for the process of Islamisation. He was responsible to declare the Ahmadis constitutionally as non-Muslims. To Islamise the society, he declared Friday as holiday instead of Sunday. He introduced the subjects of Pakistan Studies and Islamiyat as compulsory for the students. He invited the *Imam* of the Kaba to Pakistan to lead the prayers in all big cities.

However, these initiatives could not save Bhutto from the ultimate disaster: He became the victim of his own acts and deeds. But his successor, Zia-ul-Haq fully utilised the process of Islamisation to achieve his political ends and sought legitimacy by implementing Islam as an ideology in Pakistan.

Zia, with the help of the state institutions, weakened the secular and progressive forces and introduced the *Hudood*, *Qisas*, and *Diyat* in the legal system of Pakistan. He abolished the agriculture reforms and set up *Shariat* courts to dispense process. The present government of Nawaz Sharif implemented the Shariah Act and there is a possibility that more the government fails to solve the problems, more it will intensify the process of the Islamisation.

Fundamentalism emerged as an alternative system after the failure of the politicians after the partition and, later on, the failure of the Bhutto's regime. He betrayed the people by raising the slogan of socialism. Fundamentalist parties fully exploited the situation and supported Zia-ul-Haq in order to get their policies implemented.

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